Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XVIII, Issue No. 327 | SATURDAY NOVEMBER 22, 2008 | www.saipantribune.com | 50¢

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Are you looking forward to this year's holiday season?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

53 DAYS without a government budget for FY 2009

INSIDE

Mukasey Collapse

Attorney General Michael Mukasey collapsed during a speech and was rushed to a hospital.

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Rihanna Concert

Thousands of Filipino fans spent their Sunday evening with American pop icons Chris Brown and Rihanna

MAHARLIKA...Page 15

Madonna Divorce

A judge will likely grant Madonna and Guy Ritchie an initial divorce decree on Friday.

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Revitalized Susupe Beach Park launched today. PAGE 3

Hitcher in stabbing case arrested

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Police arrested Thursday night a male teenager who allegedly stabbed and seriously injured a 33-year-old man who had given him a free ride.

Police Officer 2 Jason Tarkong said the 17-year-old suspect was apprehended for assault with a dangerous weapon, robbery, and car theft.

The suspect was arrested Wednesday at 9pm. He was taken to the Superior Court yesterday afternoon for a bail hearing before associate judge David A. Wiseman.

Tarkong said the suspect was just recently released from detention at the Department of Youth Services Juvenile Deten-

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Hotel worker hurt in armed robbery

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

A female employee of a hotel in Gualo Rai was injured when a regular customer allegedly robbed her at knifepoint inside the establishment early yesterday morning.

The victim, a Chinese, suffered a small cut in her right pinky. Medics treated her at the scene.

Police officer Jason Tarkong said a patrol officer later arrested the suspect, Scott Quichocho Santos, 27, in Susupe.

Santos was arrested for robbery and assault with a dangerous weapon.

Tarkong said that police re-

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Ballesteros' baby set for christening today

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The widow of slain security guard Efren L. Ballesteros has decided to go ahead with the christening of their five-month-old son today, Saturday.

Adelaida Abella told *Saipan Tribune* that the christening of their baby will be held at Mt. Carmel Church in Chalan Kanoa at 11am.

Abella said she and the family decided to have the baby chris-

See BALLESTEROS on Page 4

WTF unveils repaired Capital Hill reservoir

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

Two months before its targeted completion date, the newly rehabilitated water reservoir on Capital Hill was already supplying water to hundreds of homes in six areas on Saipan.

The reservoir, which has a capacity of one million gallons and is located on Tapochao Road, is now servicing 1,027 customers on a 24-hour basis, piping water to households on Capital Hill, Wireless Ridge, I Denni, Talofofo, Agag and toward the Kagman Mobil intersection.

"We are actually scheduled to finish the project in December.

See WTF on Page 4

Government officials prepare to cut the ribbon for the newly completed rehabilitation work on the 1-million-gallon water reservoir on Capital Hill yesterday. From left are Keith Aughenbaugh, OIA/DOI Federal CIP coordinator; Joshua Sasamoto, corporate director, NMHC; Antonio Muna, CUC executive director; Lt. Gov. Tim Villagomez, WTF chairman; and Pete Sasamoto, WTF manager.

NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.

Local

PTI SUPPORTS REEF CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

PTI joins Light in the Eve in promoting the campaign to preserve the island's coral reefs with a donation of $700 worth of wireless products. Winners of the 5th Annual Build a Castle contest will receive cool phones from PTI. From left, Steve Machell, Australia's master sand sculptor; Teresa Kim-Tenorio, Light in the Eve Foundation president; Lawrence Boyer, Light in the Eve Foundation member; and Ed Manglona, PTI marketing coordinator.

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NOTICE OF SALE
UNDER POWER OF SALE
IN DEED OF TRUST

Edward M. Ayuyu, ("Trustor"), on or about September 17, 2001 gave and delivered to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, ("Trustee"), acting on behalf of the Department of Veterans Affairs, United States of America, ("VA"), a Deed of Trust upon certain real property hereinafter described, which Deed of Trust was recorded on September 17, 2001 under Document No. 01-1942 to secure payment of a Promissory Note of the Trustor to the Trustee, acting on behalf of the VA.

The Deed of Trust and this Notice of Sale affect the property hereafter described:

LOT NO. 345 R 426, CONTAINING AN AREA OF 929 SQUARE METERS, MORE OR LESS, AS MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED ON DRAWING/CADASTRAL PLAT NO. 345 R 09 DATED SEPTEMBER 25, 1984, COMMONWEALTH RECORDER'S FILE NO. 84-2049, THE DESCRIPTION THEREIN BEING INCORPORATED HEREIN BY REFERENCE.

The Trustor has defaulted on payment of the Note secured by the Deed of Trust, and by reason of said default Trustee issued its Notice of Default on July 20, 2006. More than thirty days have passed since the default notice was served on Trustor and said default has not been cured.

Pursuant to 2CMC §4622(b)(2), NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, Trustee will, on **December 22, 2008 at 10:00 a.m., at the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation's Office in Garapan, Saipan, whose address is P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96951** under power of sale contained in the Deed of Trust, sell the above described parcel of real property at public auction to the highest qualified bidder, to satisfy the obligations secured by said Deed of Trust. The minimum bid offer shall be not less than $10,000.00.

All bids received from outside the Commonwealth must be postmarked by December 11, 2008 and must be received no later than December 22, 2008 by 8:00 a.m. at our office in Garapan, Saipan. Off-island bidders must notify the NMHC Corporate Director in writing (by any mode of written communication including facsimile or other electronic transmission) of their intent to bid. Off-island bidders may appoint a representative to participate in the auction on their behalf.

A deposit of ten percent (10%) of the offered purchase price must be paid by the winning bidder on the bid date by 4:00 p.m. and the balance of the purchase price shall be payable by cash, certified check, cashier's check, electronic or wire transfers, within 72 hours from the time of sale.

The sale shall be without warranty as to the title or interest to be conveyed or as to the property of the Deed of Trust, other than that the Trustee is the lawful holder of such Deed of Trust.

Trustee reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to cancel or extend the date, time and place for sale of such property. Any prospective buyer must be a person authorized by the Constitution and laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to hold title to real property in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

DATED this 20th day of November 2008.

/s/Joshua T. Sasamoto
Corporate Director, NMHC

'La Fiesta's 3 gensets too expensive to repair'

House wants tighter law vs damage to public infrastructure during digs

The House of Representatives has passed a bill imposing a criminal penalty for damaging public infrastructure during excavations.

The House members voted unanimously to approve the bill, which strengthens the 1994 law on utility damage prevention. The bill will become law once passed by the Senate and signed by the governor.

Sponsored by Rep. Stanley Torres, the measure addresses the lack of a criminal penalty in the existing law, which proponents say "renders the act ineffective."

"Individuals and firms continue to proceed with underground excavation and digging activities without giving advance notice to the utility operators affected and the Department of Public Works, as required under [the law]," the bill states.

"They do so knowing that any damages resulting would merely be assessed the actual cost of the damages incurred. They fail to see the major inconvenience caused to members of the general public as a result of the disruption they cause to access essential public services," it adds.

Under the bill, any person who causes damage to underground utility equipment will be guilty of a criminal offense and may be punished by a maximum one-year jail term, a maximum fine of $5,000, or both. The person will also be responsible for the cost of repairing and replacing the damaged equipment. ***(Agnes E. Donato)***

By KRISTI EATON
kristi_eaton@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

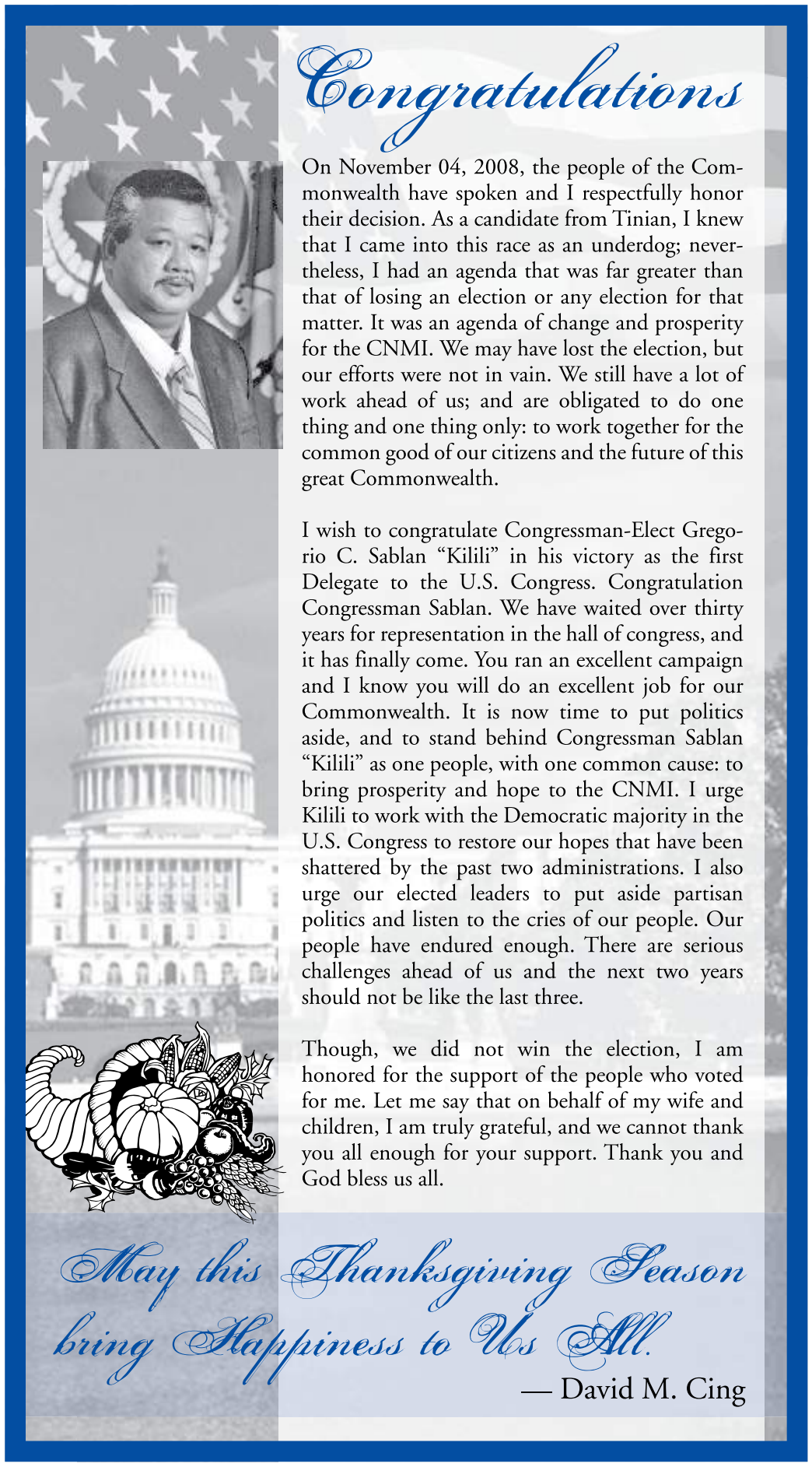
There are no plans at this point to add the three unused generators at La Fiesta shopping complex to the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s power grid, said CUC executive director Antonio Muña.

CUC has examined the condition of the three generators—each capable of producing one-megawatt of power each—but, Muña said, the engines may not be serviceable because of their condition.

"By the time I got on board, the generators there and the infrastructure there needed to be hooked up to the grid," he said. "[It] needed to be refurbished to bring it up to the point where it could generate to the grid. Before we could utilize it, we have to make that investment."

"It's a substantial investment to make it part of the production process," he added.

The engines were originally used to provide power solely to La Fiesta and Palms Resort, but in the past CUC has managed to utilize the generators' three megawatts to provide power to nearby villages by installing a transformer and switchgears to the mall's power generation system.


Congratulations
On November 04, 2008, the people of the Commonwealth have spoken and I respectfully honor their decision. As a candidate from Tinian, I knew that I came into this race as an underdog; nevertheless, I had an agenda that was far greater than that of losing an election or any election for that matter. It was an agenda of change and prosperity for the CNMI. We may have lost the election, but our efforts were not in vain. We still have a lot of work ahead of us; and are obligated to do one thing and one thing only: to work together for the common good of our citizens and the future of this great Commonwealth.
I wish to congratulate Congressman-Elect Gregorio C. Sablan "Kilili" in his victory as the first Delegate to the U.S. Congress. Congratulation Congressman Sablan. We have waited over thirty years for representation in the hall of congress, and it has finally come. You ran an excellent campaign and I know you will do an excellent job for our Commonwealth. It is now time to put politics aside, and to stand behind Congressman Sablan "Kilili" as one people, with one common cause: to bring prosperity and hope to the CNMI. I urge Kilili to work with the Democratic majority in the U.S. Congress to restore our hopes that have been shattered by the past two administrations. I also urge our elected leaders to put aside partisan politics and listen to the cries of our people. Our people have endured enough. There are serious challenges ahead of us and the next two years should not be like the last three.
Though, we did not win the election, I am honored for the support of the people who voted for me. Let me say that on behalf of my wife and children, I am truly grateful, and we cannot thank you all enough for your support. Thank you and God bless us all.
May this Thanksgiving Season bring Happiness to Us All.
— David M. Cing

Saipan projects get $367K funding

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial has signed into law a bill appropriating $367,000 to different construction projects on Saipan.

The new measure sets out how the taxes collected from Saipan developers will be distributed. It appropriates:

- $86,000 to pave the student parking area at Kagman High School and the parking areas of staff and faculty at Koblerville Elementary School;
- $15,000 to repair the baseball field in Kagman II;
- $10,000 for the upkeep of the Veterans Cemetery in Marpi;
- $107,000 for the paving and drainage improvement of Tangantangan Road;
- $104,000 to upgrade the water lines in Dandan; and
- $45,000 to pave the coral road at Northern Marianas College.

Rep. Justo S. Quitugua sponsored the legislation. Six other House members signed on as cosponsors: Reps. David Apatang, Oscar M. Babauta, Joseph N. Camacho, Joseph Deleon Guerrero, Edward T. Salas, and Stanley T. McGinnis Torres. The bill cleared the Legislature on Oct. 23, 2008. ***(Agnes E. Donato)***

Saipan won't be affected by DHL's cutback

By KRISTI EATON
Kristi_eaton@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Saipan's DHL office will not be affected by the company's restructuring of the business.

DHL Express, founded by former Saipan resident Larry Hillblom, is discontinuing U.S. domestic ground and air service on Jan. 30, 2009. International shipping to and from the United States will remain intact.

Robert Mintz, spokesman for DHL, said the restructuring would not impact Saipan because the company considers the island international. Guam and American Samoa also are considered international, he said.

Earlier this month, the company announced it would close its U.S. ground hubs and reduce the numbers of stations from 412 to 103, causing 9,500 jobs to be lost on top of the approximately 5,400 positions reduced since January of this year.

About 3,000 to 4,000 employees, focusing on the international side, will remain on board. The measures will reduce DHL's operating costs from 5.4 billion to under $1 billion, a decrease of more than 80 percent, according to the company.

"This is the right move for our U.S. Express operations given the current economic climate and for the long run," said John Mullen, Global CEO of DHL Express in a press statement. "Focusing our U.S. Express efforts on what we do better than anyone else—international shipping—serves the best interests of our customers, employees and shareholders around the world."

Hillblom was one of the founders of DHL. He was the H in DHL. He moved to Saipan in the 1980s and died during a plane crash off Anatahan waters on May 21, 1995.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Tan Holdings president Jerry Tan speaks to the group after the cleanup held in November at the Susupe Beach Park. The Tan Holdings management volunteered two Saturdays to clean up and refurbish the park.

Revitalized Susupe Beach Park launched today

The newly refurbished Susupe Beach Park will be officially presented to the public today in an afternoon ceremony that will highlight the park's use as a performance site and picnic ground.

The re-launch of the renovated Susupe landmark will begin at 2pm with a short program at the stage.

A trio of ukulele performers—Jonelie Torres, Jimin Ryu, and Bryan Cho—from Saipan Community School will kick off the musical program. These 8th grade students have been playing the ukulele for three years now.

They will immediately be followed by the top three winners in the recently held "Best Dance Crew in the CNMI" competition: TNT, Final Extreme, and the eventual winner, I Candy. Tom Pangelinan of I Candy is also expected to give an anti-graffiti message.

The emcee in today's program will be Ed Arriola.

In October and November this year, Tan Holdings management, through the leadership of Tan Holdings president Jerry Tan, took the initiative to revitalize this serene and intimate park. The team volunteered to paint all concrete areas, remove debris that had accumulated through the years, and work with the appointed contractor, Reliance Construction, in resurfacing and restoring all broken barbecue pits, concrete benches, and concrete tables.

The addition of a new roof for the stage was one of the highlights of this restoration project. The volunteers also took the time to paint the wall and water tanks of the Saipan Community School that face the park.

Now, after 20 years, the community can once again enjoy the outdoor performances that defined the Susupe Beach Park. ***(PR)***

Tinian aviator honored for making NMI history

A Tinian resident is to be formally recognized at home, seven months after he made history as the first helicopter pilot from the Northern Marianas to receive his aviator's "Wings of Gold."

Sen. Henry San Nicolas has introduced a resolution congratulating Marine 1st Lt. Adrian Anthony R. Evangelista for being the first Tinian resident to graduate from the U.S. Naval Academy in 2005, and for earning his wings as a helicopter pilot for the U.S. Marine Corps earlier this year.

"1st Lt. Adrian Anthony R. Evangelista is another success story that the people of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and especially the people of Tinian can be proud of because of [his] commitment to serve his people and his country with courage, dignity, honor, and intelligence," states the resolution.

"Evangelista had a dream and followed that dream to reality, thus setting a fine example to our youth of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands that nothing is impossible to achieve if you are determined to make a future for yourself," the resolution adds.

Born on Dec. 3, 1982, Evangelista is the son of Antonio and Evelyn Evangelista of San Jose, Tinian. He grew up on the island and graduated from the Tinian Junior/Senior High School in 2000.

As a member of the Naval Academy's boxing team, Evangelista won numerous medals and was selected to be a member of the All-American Collegiate Boxing Team in 2005.

On May 27, 2005, he was commissioned as 1st lieutenant in the Marine Corps and became the first Tinian resident to have graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy, with a bachelor's degree in information technology.

Evangelista was selected for aviation training with the Marine Corps and received his training at Helicopter Training Squadrons 8, 18, and 28. On April 4, 2008, he earned his Wings of Gold as a helicopter pilot for the Marine Corps.

In an article that appeared in the U.S. Navy's website in May 2008, Evangelista was quoted as saying that Tinian's history was a major factor in his decision to become a Marine Corps officer.

The Northern Marianas was the site of some of the bloodiest battles during World War II. Tinian, in particular, lays claim to having the largest airfield of the WWII era and being the departure point for the two atomic bombs that ended the war. ***(Agnes E. Donato)***

Eucon to undergo accreditation check

A team from the Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools will visit EUCON International College next week to determine the school's accreditation status.

From Dec. 1 to 5, five TRACS members will evaluate the school, said Christian Wei, president of EUCON.

In November 2005, the school was granted pre-accreditation status and has been working on full status since then. The school was given five years to accomplish full status but only needed three years to work toward the goal, Wei said.

EUCON is inviting community members to visit the school. Comments also can be sent to TRACS at:

TRACS
P. O. Box 328
Forest, VA 24551.

TRACS is approved by the U.S. Department of Education as a nationally recognized institutional accrediting agency and also recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation. ***(Kristi Eaton)***

Joanne Tawney: You are a Great Kid and your Mother & Father and Grandma & Grandpa think of you daily. Barka dog still looks for you and still chases the rabbits. 13 can be rough on a kid but no matter what just stay true to yourself. You are the greatest kido and what you are feeling is normal [not fun] but normal. We all go threw it So just keep smiling Kid and enjoy life. We all miss you kido! Colorado misses you! Oh by the way the 4 boys in Cedaredge are still heartbroken. Your one friend in Denver is getting his trunk fixed, can you imagine that? *Love the Tawney family*

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Pursuant to 4 CMC, Div. 7, Section 7306 (i) of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, OIC Marianas Insurance Corporation is making its intention known of increasing the company's paid-up capital and surplus in accordance with this statute.

HENRY TORRES
General Manager
OIC Marianas Insurance Corporation
1st Flr. Chong's Bldg.
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Mrs. Villagomez stirs holiday spirit

Lieutenant Governor's wife Margaret Keene-Villagomez is stirring the holiday spirit by encouraging community members to consider the needs of others during the approaching holiday season.

"While we celebrate the holidays, we remember that others who are sick, needy, or separated from loved ones are in most need of our care," said Villagomez. "Whether it's a gift of food, money, or time, we can all afford to give something to help others in our community."

Patients of the Commonwealth Health Center are expected to receive an early holiday treat this month, as Keene-Villagomez prepares to deliver food baskets in celebration of Thanksgiving. The baskets, comprised of fresh fruit and sweets, will be personally delivered to patients by Keene-Villagomez a few days before Thanksgiving.

"This visit is intended to lift the spirits of patients and their families and to give them hope during the holiday season," said Keene-Villagomez. "Despite our economic situation, I encourage each member of our community to embrace a spirit of giving this holiday season. After all, the spirit of Christmas is held in the heart, not wrapped in paper."

Villagomez is also expected to deliver baskets to the Commonwealth Guidance Center and the CHC Tinian and Rota guest houses. ***(PR)***

HITCHER

From Page 1

tion Facility.

The victim, a Chinese, sustained lacerations and stab wounds to the right arm, chest, rib, and stomach.

DPS received a 911 call Monday night about an injured person near LJ's Market in Chalan Kanoa.

When a police officer arrived, he saw the victim lying on the ground, bleeding from the right arm and chest.

The victim told the officer that he gave the suspect a ride in his car from Happy Market in As Lito to Chalan Kanoa.

Upon reaching the Soledad Loop, a secondary road behind LJ Market in Chalan Kanoa, the suspect allegedly reached for the ignition of the car, turned the engine off, and got the car keys.

The suspect then began stabbing the victim. The victim managed to get away through the driver's door. The suspect then drove off with the car.

The victim yelled for help and several people nearby assisted him and called police.

The victim's car—a gray 1995 Toyota Tercel—was later found abandoned on Haiguas Lane in As Perdido.

Tarkong said that on Wednesday night, Detective Patrick Maanao met with the victim, who disclosed that the suspect is related to his wife. Maanao learned that the suspect had called the victim for a ride Monday night.

CAPITOL VISIT JUDE MARFIL

From left, CNMI Delegate-elect Gregorio C. Sablan, Rep. Neil Abercrombie (D-Hawai'i) and CNMI House Floor Leader Joseph James N. Camacho. This photo was taken before Abercrombie took Sablan to the Democratic Caucus where congresspersons would elect the chairman of the House Energy Committee in the 111th Congress.

HOTEL

From Page 1

ceived a 911 disturbance call yesterday at 2:04am at the Park Villa Hotel in Gualo Rai, formerly called the Honeymoon Motel.

Preliminary investigation showed that Santos, who is a regular customer of Park Villa Hotel, had asked the victim for some towels. The victim returned with the items, but Santos suddenly ran up to her outside the room and grabbed her by the neck, Tarkong said.

The suspect wrapped one of the towels around her neck to strangle her. At the same time, he held a knife to the victim's stomach and dragged her toward the room.

The victim struggled as Santos repeatedly shouted at her to give him money. The hotel employee opened her waist pouch and threw the money on the floor.

Santos released her to pick up the money. The victim ran and hid in another room.

When the victim heard the suspect's car leaving the area, she called her supervisor, who then contacted police.

Police Officer Norbert Mettao obtained a description of the suspect, his car, and its license plate, as recorded in the hotel.

An all-points bulletin was put out over the police radio with the description of the suspect, the car, and license plate.

At 3:30am, Police Officer Chris Leon Guerrero spotted the vehicle in Susupe near the intersection going to Susupe Lake. Leon Guerrero followed the car and pulled it over near Family Market. The officer detained Santos.

Officer Mettao arrived at the site with the victim, who identified Santos as the same person who robbed her.

Santos allegedly admitted to another police officer that he robbed the victim because he needed the money. Approximately $80 was stolen from the victim.

Police said evidence, including a knife, was secured at the scene and processed by the crime scene technician.

BALLESTEROS

From Page 1

tened before Ballesteros' body is flown off to Isabela province in the Philippines.

"We just followed his [Ballesteros] wish when he was alive to have the christening here," she said in Tagalog.

Abella said she and her husband were actually planning to hold the christening on Nov. 30.

When Ballesteros was found dead Tuesday morning at the Marianas High School campus in Susupe, the wife was at that moment waiting for him to arrive home because they were set to process the papers for the christening.

She said it was at 10am when a friend called her on the phone that Ballesteros had been found dead at MHS.

"I was so nervous. I didn't know what to do then. Then my husband's employer called me, then a detective," Abella said.

She said it was more difficult when she picked up their 12-year-old son at Hopwood School because he was not aware that his father had been killed.

Abella said it was hard for her to tell their son but a friend who saw them came up to them and asked about the death of Ballesteros.

"While we were in the car, I then told my son what happened to his father. He didn't say anything; he just cried," the teary-eyed Abella recalled.

Police have already arrested the three suspects—Eric Rabauliman, 18; Randy Igisomar, 16; and Edward Blas, 16. The three are all students at MHS.

Police say Igisomar and Rabauliman have confessed to the crime, saying that they attacked the security guard with a piece of wood, a PVC pipe, and a rebar before breaking into several classrooms at MHS where they stole laptops and money.

Abella said Ballesteros' wallet containing $300 cash and a wristwatch were stolen.

WTF

From Page 1

So we are one month ahead. But we have been serving the people since October,' said Water Task Force coordinator Pete Sasamoto after the ribbon cutting ceremony yesterday.

He said the rehabilitation of the 54-year old reservoir is a project of the Water Task Force, chaired by Lt. Gov. Tim Villagomez, and Commonwealth Utilities Corporation.

Villagomez and CUC executive director Antonio Muña led yesterday's ribbon-cutting rites yesterday, together with corporate director Joshua Sasamoto of the Northern Marianas Housing Corp. and Federal Capital Improvement Projects Coordinator Keith Aughenbaugh of the Office of Insular Affairs at the Department of the Interior.

"This is a landmark and the location is on a strategic area," said Villagomez.

Muña said the project's completion would resolve some issues regarding water supply to the area.

"It's a wonderful contribution to the community," he said.

The reservoir has a diameter of 101 ft. and a height of 21 ft. It was erected in 1954 by the U.S. Navy during the Trusteeship Government. It sprung several leaks in later years and has been idle since then.

The rehabilitation project included cleaning, sealing and painting the tank's interior and exterior.

Contractor Maeda Corporation installed bypass lines to connect three wells to the existing 12-inch transmission line and installed eight inches of bypass to combine the 10-inch distribution lines to allow water services to continue during rehabilitation.

The total contract amount was $319,759.93.

They also installed a 140-foot 6-inch distribution line to provide continuous water service and paved 1,300 square feet of asphalt, 2,002 feet of percolation trench and earth berm and installed a stainless steel vent.

Rehabilitation work started in April, funded by NMHC with an amount of $240,239.26 for the tank. An amount of $79,520.67 for the tie-in and paving was made available through an OIA CIP grant.

PACIFIC BRIEFS

Faleomavaega steps in to quell passport flap

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (RNZI/PIR)—American Samoa's member of the U.S. Congress Faleomavaega Eni Hunkin has called on Samoans not to pressure the U.S. judiciary over the detention of Cabinet Minister Hans Joachim Keil. Keil is accused of illegally holding a U.S. passport and is under strict bail conditions in Missouri where is he required to stay until his case is heard. Faleomavaega says he's met members of Keil's family as well as the U.S. Veterans Association of Samoa, of which Keil is a member. The Congressman says he has told the Keil family that any form of political pressure being placed on the US judiciary is unacceptable. He says he has offered to testify on Keil's behalf when he appears in court. Faleomavaega also says Keil is not a criminal or a terrorist, and the matter could have been handled differently.

Pacific tourist industry encouraged to use Internet

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (RNZI/PIR)—Pacific tourism operators are being encouraged to use the Internet to grow both their businesses, and awareness of local biodiversity. A new organization has been launched to speak for the Pacific on the relationship between Tourism, bio-diversity and the Internet, stemming from a workshop on tourism, biodiversity and information technology in Samoa. Simon Milne, a professor of tourism at the Auckland University of Technology, says it's also a great way to spread knowledge among the tourism industry itself. "About the value of promoting biodiversity, promoting environmental sustainability, because many travelers to the region are coming from countries in the west, where environmental consciousness is not only a way of life, but perhaps even fashionable." Simon Milne says there needs to be a balance between mass tourism and eco-tourism, because they sustain each other.

Nine Pacific nations consider partnerships

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (RNZI/PIR)—Senior government officials from nine Pacific developing nations have recently shared their knowledge and experiences in managing public-private partnerships in a workshop held in Brisbane. The workshop, "Strengthening Private Sector Participation for Physical Infrastructure in the Pacific Region", was sponsored by the Asian Development Bank, the Asian Development Bank Institute and the Bond University. The Samoa Observer reports the workshop aims to raise awareness of the potential for projects in the Pacific and demonstrate the core elements required for their successful implementation. Public Private Partnerships are contractual arrangements between the public and private sector for the provision of assets and/or services such as power, water, transportation, education and health. Eugenue Zhukov, the Regional Director of ADB's Sydney Office says the bank is committed to supporting the development of these kinds of policy framework, to build capacity within the public sector to identify opportunities.

Tonga ships 2,200 tons of squash to Asian markets

NUKUALOFA, Tonga (Matangi Tonga/PIR)—Tongan squash exports shipped a total of 2,200 tonnes of Squash to Japan and South Korea this year. Nishi Trading Company Ltd., the biggest of the five squash export companies, exported 1,130 tonnes. Minolu Nishi, the managing director of Nishi Trading said that at the end of the squash season in October his company had exported 850 tonnes to Japan and 280 tonnes to South Korea. The rest of Tonga's total squash exports of 1,070 was shared by the four other squash exporters, Axis Company, Kabocha Export, Touliki Trading and Mark Shipping. Minolu said that the yield this year was good. "For one kilo of seeds we were able to produce nine tonnes of export squash," he said.

Solomons official goes berserk at restaurant

HONIARA, Solomon Islands (The National Online/PIR)—The Embassy of Taiwan in Solomon Islands has confirmed the attacks made by the government official from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, William Marau, as true. This was following reports by the local newspaper, Solomon Star, saying that Marau was under training in Taiwan when he lashed out during a drunken stupor at a restaurant, attacking a few people including a police officer and also damaged properties. Solomon Times spoke to the Embassy of Taiwan's Media Officer, who revealed that Marau is currently awaiting his verdict as his case is now in judicial process in Taipei. The spokesperson said that Marau is not being held in custody and has not been jailed for what he did; however, he is currently being looked after by the Solomon Islands Embassy in Taiwan.

Local SHRM chapter gets 'Superstar' award

ON THE NET
SHRM Web site: www.shrm.org

The CNMI Chapter for the Society for Human Resource Management recently received a "Membership Superstar Award" from the National SHRM organization in Washington, D.C.

"Your chapter has achieved a Membership Superstar based on a 10%+ increase in your SHRM membership as of October 31, 2008," stated Crystal Adair, Regional Administrator for the SHRM. "Although the 'official' 2008 count of our high-achieving membership State Councils and Chapters will include all of 2008, we did not want to miss this opportunity at to recognize all of you!"

The Chapter was also recognized for this significant achievement at SHRM's Annual Leadership Conference in Arlington, Virginia. Present to receive the award is CNMI Chapter President, Ms. Frances Torres-Salas and 2009 President-Elect Ms. Marlene C. Cruz. "This is great news and we are excited about receiving such a prestigious recognition," stated Ms. Torres-Salas.

Special ribbons designating Membership Superstars and Stars for those State Councils and Chapters achieving at these levels will be available at the registration area.

The Society for Human Resource Management is the world's largest association devoted to human resource management. Representing more than 250,000 members in over 140 countries, the Society serves the needs of HR professionals and advances the interests of the HR profession. Founded in 1948, SHRM has more than 575 affiliated chapters within the United States and subsidiary offices in China and India.

The CNMI Chapter is composed of human resource professionals from a variety of industries, large and small, who recognize a need for a local society for professionals in the human resource field. The CNMI Chapter is affiliated with the national organization. To learn more about SHRM, visit SHRM Online at www.shrm.org. ***(PR)***

Rasa and Camacho: The pride of Saipan Southern High School

Rasa

Michelle Sablan Rasa is the Teacher of the Year for Saipan Southern High School. It is not what she did throughout the years that made her our TOY, it is what she did last year that made her stand out amongst our teachers. Other than being a great History teacher, it is her relationship with the students and dedication to the school that makes her exemplary. After being a Senior Advisor for the class of 2007, she started last year by taking over Close UP, Year Book, Junior Statesmen and a coach for our Forensic students. She has always been active and could never say no to anybody. She is one of the reasons why students love attending SSHS. It is our extracurricular activities that keep our students occupied rather than doing nothing.

Camacho

Saipan Southern High's Support Staff of the Year is Paul Camacho. He is the school's Truant Officer and a major component in the success and safety of the school. Paul has been working for the school the past four years and is respected by students, teachers and parents at the school. His sense of leadership, discipline and local know-how is shown in the hard work that he does on campus and is reflected in his relation with our students and staff.

The lovable, personable, brilliant teachers of Saipan Southern High

By DONNA MAE C. FORMALEJO
ENGLISH 10 PRE-HONORS (MS. AUTUMN BEECHLER)

Have you seen a teacher standing at six-foot-seven? Have you heard bus tales of the intolerable disciplinarian? Have you seen the photo of the CNMI's 2007-2008 Teacher of the Year with President George W. Bush? Have you encountered teachers or staff members who have served their respective school since the day its doors opened? Welcome to Saipan Southern High School.

No matter what classroom you walk into, the teacher in the classroom will undoubtedly be a Highly Qualified Teacher. With the economic problems the CNMI is facing, it's a blessing to even have HQTs still on island. Some of our teachers even take the time to teach hours before and after school, and some are actively involved in serving the community as well. They set high standards for the school and its students.

Behind each teacher is a unique and enthusiastic individual. Our elite group of teachers each has a track record for being the loudest, funniest, tallest, shortest, or any other superlative person on campus. From their height—tall or short—to their volume, to their sense of humor, to their ethnic background, to their personal preferences, SSHS teacher personalities definitely stand out. They surely have a lesson plan you'll remember.

Last and certainly not the least, our teachers are absolutely lovable. The closeness and emotional attachment we SSHS students share with our teachers is priceless. You can call them a second group of parents, mentors—the most effectively influential group of individuals on island.

Teachers work miracles everyday. SSHS teachers save the world. Then again, why would you take my word for it? Witness the CNMI's educational dream team in action yourself. See what they can really do.

SSHS: The pride of the Marianas

By ASHLEY V. ALEJO
3RD PERIOD
FRESHMAN ENGLISH (MR. MIURA)

I am a firm believer that in order for students to be successful in school, they must be provided a non-hostile work environment. At Saipan Southern High School the administrators, support staff, teachers, and students take pride in maintaining a beautiful campus free of litter, graffiti, and other unattractive elements.

Our administrators lead the way by instilling proper values and a sense of pride throughout campus. We all do our share in keeping the campus free of litter, but it is our support staff that keeps our landscape, hallways, and buildings immaculate. Our unsung heroes are Mr. Kevin Babauta, Mr. Paul Camacho, Mr. Arnold Mendiola, Mr. Hilario Guiao, Mr. Jack Sanchez, and Mr. Raul Blanca. They deserve a lot of credit for the thankless services they provide our school.

During the rainy season the weeds and bushes grow at an astounding rate. Our support staff can be seen around the campus either baking in the scorching sun or soaking in the pouring rain brush-cutting or mowing the over-growth.

Whenever anything needs fixing, whether it be major like the water pump or as simple as changing a light bulb, our support staff will have it taken cared of in a timely manner. The hallways and buildings are free of litter and graffiti because the support staff is always there. Thankfully, they never let the administrators, teachers, or students down.

Although I have only been attending Saipan Southern High School for eight weeks, it has become evident that the learning environment plays a major role in a student's success. Imagine attending a school where the restrooms, classrooms, hallways, cafeteria, and other places in school are litter free and graffiti free. Students are free from unnecessary distractions and are able to focus on their studies. Thanks to the positive culture instilled in the staff and students by our administrators and the dedication of our outstanding support staff, Saipan Southern High School is such a school. We all work together to keep our campus beautiful. "Un Eskuela Un Korason"

The outstanding counselors of SSHS

By PEDRO DUENAS
JUNIOR ENGLISH

"The hardest arithmetic to master is that which enables us to count our blessings."—Eric Hoffer

The counselors here at Saipan Southern High School are the most superb because they show true passion for what they do. They are motivated to help students with their needs wholeheartedly. Without these important people, my job as a student would be much more difficult than it already is. They encourage me to take classes that are to benefit my studies and which will later help me.

These magnificent people not only keep us motivated, but they are also a friend in times of difficulty. The counselors are keen to help students who have problems, be it family, love life, etc. We students can approach them without hesitation because we know they are willing to sit down and listen to what we have to say. They are our parents away from home and a friend when we need one. These supportive helpers also give tips on how to stay on top of the pack. A lot of eager students are aiming to be in the top 10, and the counselors explain what we should do to achieve that.

Saipan Southern High School would not be what it is without our counselors: Darrah Tagabuel, Joleen Borja, and Jocelyn Manibusan. These women make up the heart of SSHS. I know further down the road, other students will experience the true meaning of passion through these counselors. They have made a big impact in our lives and I will be forever thankful for what they have done.

"A counselor affects eternity; you can never tell where their influence stops."—Henry Adams

Notice of Public Hearing
S.Y. Kim's Development Corp.

The public is invited to provide comments at a Zoning Board public hearing on Conditional Use Permit Application, No. 2008-2063, by S.Y. Kim's Development Corp. The application is for the warehousing of lube oil in Puerto Rico.

Date:	**December 05, 2008**
Time:	**6:00 pm**
Place:	**CRM Conference Room, 1st Floor, Morgen Building, Beach Road Garapan.**

The conditional use application may be viewed at the Zoning Office, 2nd Floor, Joeten Building, DanDan, Saipan. Comments on the project may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may also be submitted in writing to the Zoning Office no later than 4:30 pm, December 04, 2008. Written comments may be submitted via e-mail to staff@zoning.gov.mp, via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or delivered to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, DanDan, Saipan.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please contact Steve Tilley at 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq. & Division 3 of Title 10 CMC). /s/ Henry S. Hofschneider, Chair.

NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD MEETING

The regular monthly meeting of the Zoning Board will be held on December 5, 2008 at 6:00 pm. at the Morgen Building, San Jose Beach Road, 1st Floor. The public is invited to attend. The agenda will include:

A. Preliminary Matters: Call to Order, Roll Call, Adoption of Agenda, Adoption of Minutes, Communications
B. Reports: Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Administrator, Committees, Legal Counsel
C. Public Hearings.
   1. Notice of Violation: 2008-1020 Big Bang Enterprise
   2. Conditional Use: 2008-2063 S.Y. Kim's Development Corp
   3. Preliminary Plat Major Subdivision: 2008-1878 Jane Mack
D. Contested Cases. None
E. Permits and Related Actions - Review and Decide
   1. Conditional Use: 2008-2063 S.Y. Kim's Development Corp
   2. Preliminary Plat Major Subdivision: 2008-1878 Jane Mack
F. Old Business
   1. Re-adopt rezones adopted at November 13, 2008 Zoning Board Meeting
      a. Map 20. Rezone PR to TR, Lots 030 H 01, 02, 03; Rezone VR to VC, various lots
      b. Map 24. Rezone VC to TR, Lots 006 H 35, 36, 37, 38; Rezone VC to TR Lots 008 H 31, 33, 36, 37; Rezone VR to VC, various lots
G. New Business.
   1. Review new rezone proposals and approve advertising for public comment.
H. Public Comment
I. Executive (Closed) Session - Consult with legal counsel regarding pending or anticipated legal matters.
J. Miscellaneous: Other Matters, Announcements, Next Meeting. Adjourn

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the Board meeting, or if you require assistance, please contact Steve Tilley, Zoning Administrator at 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq. & 10 CMC 3511, et seq.). /s/ Henry S. Hofschneider, Chair.

Northern Mariana Islands Bar Examination

The Northern Mariana Islands Bar Examinations (MBE, MPT, and Essay) will be administered on Wednesday, February 25, 2009 and Thursday, February 26, 2009. Interested applicants may obtain the application form and necessary information from the Bar Administrator by calling telephone no. (670) 236-9800, visiting the judiciary's website at http://www.justice.gov.mp or by writing to P.O. Box 502165, Saipan, MP 96950.

All applications and required fees must be submitted to the Bar Administrator no later than December 26, 2008.

Dated this 7th day of November, 2008.

/s/ **NORA V. BORJA**
Bar Administrator

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XVIII, Issue No. 327

Published daily at 2/F CIC Centre,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

Lynn A. Knight PUBLISHER
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MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Detroit at the brink

After two days of congressional testimony from the heads of the Big Three automakers and the United Auto Workers , the prospects for federal aid are anything but certain, and a big part of the reason is that Detroit is still in denial. Yes, the auto industry has cut costs and improved products more than its critics may recognize. But the companies and union must stop insisting that the financial crisis alone is responsible for their current predicament—and that federal aid should therefore not hinge on more restructuring.

In fact, the industry remains burdened by work rules—including a "jobs bank" that pays laid-off employees not to work—and by health and pension benefits that exceed those of its competitors. Private investors evidently have no desire to buy car company stocks or bonds to underwrite better-than-usual health benefits for hundreds of thousands of UAW members, active and retired; the general public should not have to do so, either. And while U.S. companies have been making some better models of vehicles in terms of initial quality, when it comes to projected resale value, Detroit still lags far behind European and Asian firms, as Kelley Blue Book reported this week.

Chapter 11 bankruptcy would force the companies to tackle these issues, but at the cost of much collateral damage to the rest of the economy. That should be avoided if reasonably possible. Congress should step into the breach, however, only in return for ironclad commitments that Detroit will revamp its business—from the executive suite to the overgrown dealership network to the labor agreement. Otherwise, no matter how much the companies downsize, they will not emerge as viable entities, and the money will be wasted—whether it comes from the Treasury Department's bailout fund, as Democrats in Congress prefer, or from $25 billion in already-approved energy-efficiency loans, as the Bush administration wants.

The two political parties are engaged in a game of chicken, threatening each other with blame for letting the auto industry fail. This argument obscures the fact that none of the plans under discussion would guarantee that the companies go through the needed bankruptcy-like restructuring. For its part, an administration-backed Republican bill would use the energy-efficiency loan's requirement that the recipients be "viable" to compel change. Senate Democrats demanded only modest limits on executive compensation, warrants for the government, and "a detailed plan on how the government funds requested will be utilized to ensure the long-term financial posture of the company" and to produce fuel-efficient vehicles. A House bill drafted by Financial Services Committee Chairman Barney Frank, D-Mass., is better in that it breaks the loan into short- and long-term pieces, with the latter portion being contingent on the Obama administration's approval by April 1 of a "restructuring" plan that would include "rationalization of costs" and debt renegotiation. Yet this merely sets up an inevitably political negotiation with the next administration. Spending public money to prop up the auto industry might make sense if, and only if, the Big Three and their union agree that their current ways are not sustainable.

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401(K) STATEMENT
NEWS
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"The ECONOMY IS IN WORSE SHAPE THAN WE THOUGHT. APPARENTLY, NOW I OWE MY 401(K) MONEY..."

In Darfur, call mass rape what it is: Genocide

By DAVID SCHEFFER
Special to the Los Angeles Times

Scheffer, U.S. ambassador at large for war crimes issues from 1997 to 2001, is a law professor and director of the Center for International Human Rights at Northwestern University School of Law.

People hear the word "genocide" and think of 6 million Jews killed by the Nazis during the Holocaust or the estimated 800,000 mostly Tutsis slaughtered in Rwanda. They do not imagine that rape can be so well planned and done on such a mass scale as to wipe out much of an ethnic group just as thoroughly, if more slowly, than large-scale murder.

Sudan's president, Omar Hassan Ahmed Bashir, stands accused of—among other horrible crimes—masterminding the use of rape as a form of genocide against several ethnic groups in Darfur. In the coming weeks, three judges of the International Criminal Court in The Hague will decide whether that charge will be included in the likely arrest warrant against him. Hanging in the balance is whether the heinous modern warfare strategy of mass rape will be condemned and prosecuted for what it truly is: genocide.

The court's prosecutor, Luis Moreno-Ocampo, has filed other charges as well, including war crimes, crimes against humanity and "mass murder as genocide." But the groundbreaking charge is rape as genocide, which relies on two lesser-known ways of destroying a people: "causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group" or "deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part."

Prosecuting the crime of rape under these particular formulations is unprecedented for the International Criminal Court. There were mass rapes in Rwanda in 1994, for instance, but many of the victims were quickly killed as part of the overall genocide. In Darfur, many rape victims survive, but they suffer grievous harm to their bodies, minds and ethnic identities that can lead to a genocidal result.

Despite rulings from earlier Rwanda and Bosnia war crimes tribunals that offer guidance, the relative novelty and complexity of rape-as-genocide cases might impel the judges to stick to more familiar war crimes terrain. But the judges only have to find reasonable grounds to include the rape-as-genocide charges on the Bashir warrant. They need not establish proof beyond a reasonable doubt, the standard applied at trial.

The evidence presented by Moreno-Ocampo appears compelling. The prosecutor's investigation reveals that, since 2003, Bashir's forces and agents have driven about 2.5 million Sudanese, including substantial numbers of the Fur, Massalit and Zaghawa ethnic groups, into camps of internally displaced persons. They then raped and inflicted other forms of severe sexual violence on thousands and continue to do so. A common tactic is for the janjaweed militia and Sudan's armed forces and security agents to lie in wait outside the camps to rape—or often gang-rape—the women and girls who come out to collect firewood, grass or water in order to survive.

"Maybe around 20 men rape one woman," one victim said in a report cited by the prosecutor. "These things are normal for us here in Darfur. ... They rape women in front of their mothers and fathers."

"Janjaweed babies" born of the rapes rarely have a future in the mother's ethnic group. Infanticide and abandonment are common. Another victim explained: "They kill our males and dilute our blood with rape. (They) ... want to finish us as a people, end our history."

Imagine the collective horror if men and boys in these ethnic groups were raped and then castrated. Would anyone doubt that genocidal impulses were at work by depriving men of their ability to father children? In Darfur, raped women and girls are similarly crippled.

In the 1990s, when I was the U.S. ambassador at large for war crimes issues, I met scores of women who had been raped during the atrocities in the Balkans, Sierra Leone, Uganda and the eastern Congo. In most cases, the experience was devastating to their character, their ethnic bonds and often to their physical health. Even if they were still physically able to bear children, these women typically were ostracized from their communities and could not marry their ethnic men. Confronted with these stories, I recognized that mass rape can destroy a substantial part of a group and thus constitute genocide.

Prosecuting the rapes in Darfur as a crime against humanity would get at the crime's seriousness. But genocide is another order of destruction altogether. Elevating the mass-rape charges to that level indicates that Bashir intended not only to terrorize women or force a population out of a particular region but to end—or substantially imperil—the very existence of the three ethnic groups that dared to challenge his power.

Between September 2003 and January 2005, Sudanese military and janjaweed militia slaughtered an estimated 35,000 civilians in Darfur. Since the onset of the violence, an additional 265,000 civilians have suffered slow deaths caused by injury, starvation, lack of water or other conditions of deprivation in the camps. The evidence shows a sophisticated strategy at work: scorched-earth assaults on ethnic villages followed by isolation in displacement camps where starvation, illness and rape take a gruesome toll.

Indeed, it would be easier for the court to focus on these almost undeniable crimes against humanity. But here the judges confront a harder task: to find reasonable grounds that Bashir had the "specific criminal intent" to use rape as a genocidal tool.

Genocide cases prosecuted before other war crimes tribunals have found that specific intent can be inferred from the factual circumstances of the crime. In Darfur, clearly, there is no shortage of actions, including repeated mass rapes, that point to Bashir's aim to destroy substantial parts of the Fur, Massalit and Zaghawa ethnic groups.

The wild card remains the U.N. Security Council. Under the treaty that governs the International Criminal Court, the council can suspend any prosecution for a year. China, Russia and even the African Union are pressuring the council to invoke that right. They claim that Bashir will unleash hell on U.N. peacekeepers in Darfur if he is charged and destroy hope for any peace settlement in Sudan. So far, the United States has signaled it will oppose any such efforts to stall the case—as well it should.

The judges of the International Criminal Court must be afforded the opportunity to continue reviewing the evidence without interference by the Security Council. If they find reasonable grounds to charge Bashir with rape as genocide, thousands of women and girls attacked by rapists as a means of destroying their ethnic groups will share a small measure of justice and peace.

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, Century Insurance Building, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Five myths about one mythic election

By CHRIS CILLIZZA
The Washington Post

Chris Cillizza covers the White House for The Washington Post *and writes The Fix, a political blog, on washingtonpost.com.*

WASHINGTON—The 2008 presidential election ended less than two weeks ago, but the mythmaking machine has already begun to churn. President-elect Barack Obama transformed the face of the electorate! The Republican Party will be a miserable minority in Congress for the next century! Cats and dogs are now living together! Below we explode the five biggest myths that have already sprung up around the election that was.

1. The Republican Party suffered a death blow.

There's no question that losing six Senate seats and 24 House seats (not to mention the White House) wasn't a step forward for the Grand Old Party. But there are two good reasons to believe that Republicans will be back on their feet sooner than many people expect.

First, much of the Republicans' permanent political class has concluded that electing Sen. John McCain as president would have amounted to applying a Band-Aid to a gaping wound. Given the state of the party—bereft of a signature new idea and without many fresh faces—plenty of Republican operatives have come to subscribe to what I'd call the Ra's al Ghul theory of rebuilding: Ghul, a villain in the movie "Batman Begins," advocates destroying the city of Gotham to rebuild it from the ground up. "It is beyond saving and must be allowed to die," he says—a sentiment echoed by many Republicans these days, who argue that hitting rock bottom was the only way to allow new faces and ideas to emerge.

Second, historical electoral patterns suggest that Republicans could pick up a passel of Senate and House seats in 2010—the first midterm election under President Obama. Every president (save one) since Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1934 has lost seats in the House in his first midterm election. The exception? George W. Bush in 2002, when Republicans picked up six House seats and two Senate seats—a historic anomaly widely credited to the world-changing events of Sept. 11, 2001.

2. A wave of black voters and young people was the key to Obama's victory.

Afraid not. Exit polling suggests that there was no statistically significant increase in voting among either group. Black voters made up 11 percent of the electorate in 2004 and 13 percent in 2008, while young voters comprised 17 percent of all voters in 2004 and 18 percent four years later.

The surge in young and African American voters is not entirely the stuff of myth, however. Although their percentages as a portion of the electorate didn't increase measurably, Obama did seven points better among black voters than Sen. John Kerry did in 2004 and scored a 13-point improvement over Kerry's total among young voters.

3. Now that they control the White House and Congress, Democrats will usher in a new progressive era.

Not likely. At first glance, the numbers do look encouraging for proponents of a new New Deal era in government: Obama claimed at least 364 electoral votes and more than 52.5 percent of the overall popular vote, while Democrats now control at least 57 seats in the Senate and 255 in the House.

But look more closely, and you see a heavy influx of moderate to conservative members in the incoming freshman Democratic class, particularly in the House. Of the 24 Republican-held districts that Democrats won in 2008, Kerry carried just three in 2004. Democratic victories on Nov. 4 included Alabama's 2nd district (where Kerry took 33 percent of the vote) and Idaho's at-large seat (where Kerry won just 30 percent). In fact, according to tabulations by National Journal's Richard E. Cohen, 81 House Democrats in the 111th Congress will represent districts that Bush carried in 2004.

The fact that roughly a third of the Democratic House majority sits in seats with Republican underpinnings (at least at the presidential level) is almost certain to keep a liberal dream agenda from moving through Congress. The first rule of politics is survival, and if these new arrivals to Washington want to stick around, they are likely to build centrist voting records between now and 2010.

4. A Republican candidate could have won the presidency this year.

I doubt it. A look at this year's political atmospherics suggests that the environment was so badly poisoned that no Republican—not Mitt Romney, not Mike Huckabee, not even the potential future GOP savior, Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal—could have beaten Obama on Nov. 4.

Why not? Three words (and a middle initial): President George W. Bush.

In the national exit poll, more than seven in 10 voters said that they disapproved of the job Bush was doing; not surprisingly, Obama resoundingly won that group, 67 percent to 31 percent. But here's an even more stunning fact: While 7 percent of the exit-poll sample strongly approved of the job Bush was doing, a whopping 51 percent strongly disapproved. Obama won those strong disapprovers 82 percent to 16 percent. And Bush's approval numbers looked grim for the GOP even before the September financial meltdown.

Just one in five voters in the national exit polls said that the country was "generally going in the right direction." McCain won that group 71 percent to Obama's 27 percent. But among the 75 percent of voters who said that the country was "seriously off on the wrong track," Obama had a thumping 26-point edge.

Those numbers speak to the damage that eight years of the Bush administration have done to the Republican brand. It's a burden that any candidate running for president with an "R" after his—or her—name would have had to drag around the country.

5. McCain made a huge mistake in picking Sarah Palin.

Love her or loathe her, the data appear somewhere close to conclusive that Palin did little to help—and, in fact, did some to hurt—McCain's attempts to reach out to independents and Democrats. But just because Palin doesn't appear to have helped McCain move to the middle doesn't mean that picking her was the wrong move.

Remember where McCain found himself this past summer. He had won the Republican nomination, but the GOP base clearly felt little buy-in into his campaign. A slew of national polls reflected that energy gap, with Democrats revved up about the election and their candidate and Republicans somewhere between tepid and glum.

Enter Palin, who was embraced with a bear hug by the party's conservative base. All of a sudden, cultural conservatives were thrilled at the chance to put "one of their own" in the White House. In fact, of the 60 percent of voters who told exit pollsters that McCain's choice of Palin was a "factor" in their final decision, the Arizona senator won 56 percent to 43 percent.

For skittish conservatives looking for more evidence that McCain understood their needs and concerns, Palin did the trick. It's hard to imagine conservatives rallying to McCain—even to the relatively limited extent that they did—without Palin on the ticket. And without the base, McCain's loss could have been far worse.

Which myths did we miss? Let the conversation begin!

A grateful nation needs to do more for veterans

By TIM RUTTEN
(c) 2008, Los Angeles Times

Rutten is a Times columnist. E-mail him at timothy.rutten@latimes.com.

There seems to be little energy these days for anything but anxiety and finger-pointing about the economy. Still, it's sobering—even shocking—that Monday's final report by the Research Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses failed to find a place on the front page of a single major newspaper.

For nearly 20 years, a succession of Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense officials under both Republican and Democratic presidents have denied even the existence of what's come to be called Gulf War syndrome, a complex of neurological afflictions ranging from memory problems and chronic pain to brain cancer and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis. Veterans who have sought help for their illnesses frequently have been treated as head cases or, worse, malingerers.

Now a panel of prestigious scientists and veterans, working under congressional mandate, has concluded not only that the syndrome exists but also that it afflicts at least 175,000 Gulf War vets—one in four of those who served. The cause, according to the panel's 450-page report, was ingestion of a drug administered out of fear the Iraqis would use nerve gas, as well as exposure to pesticides used to hold down sand fleas. There is no known cure for Gulf War syndrome, and the panel has recommended an annual appropriation of $60 million to find one.

That would be a good first step—but only that.

It would be convenient to regard neglect of the Gulf War vets as an anomaly, but the discomforting fact is that it's all of a piece with this country's historic maltreatment of its returning service men and women. The government, usually extravagant in its rhetorical gratitude for military service, has been miserly when it comes to making "the thanks of a grateful nation" material.

Shays' Rebellion, the new American nation's first exercise in popular unrest, occurred before the U.S. Constitution was written and involved unpaid Revolutionary War conscripts who returned home to find their farms seized for back taxes. Some were thrown into debtors' prisons.

Some 75 years later, a traditional ballad, "Paddy's Lamentation," recounted the sad fate of new Irish immigrants lured into New York's famous "Fighting 69th" during the Civil War, then left disabled and without their promised pensions:

General Meagher to us said, If you get shot and lose your head
Every mother's son of you will get a pension
In the war I lost my leg, all I've now is a wooden peg
By my soul it is the truth to you I mention.

In 1932, the use of federal troops to attack and disperse the so-called Bonus Marchers—17,000 World War I veterans and their families who converged on Washington to demand early payment of promised federal benefits—remains a national disgrace.

The protracted struggle of many Vietnam vets to win decent treatment for both post-traumatic stress disorder and exposure to the herbicide Agent Orange remains a fresh and painful memory.

Paradoxically, the one instance in which the nation opened its heart and wallet to returning service men and women, the 1944 Servicemen's Readjustment Act, or GI Bill of Rights, did as much for the country as it did for the vets.

Often regarded by historians as the New Deal's final piece of legislation, the GI Bill not only helped keep the United States from falling back into depression, but it also dramatically expanded the middle class, increased home ownership exponentially and democratized higher education in ways that benefit us still.

President-elect Barack Obama will have a quick opportunity to demonstrate that, although he opposed the Iraq war, he will not waver in support of the men and women asked to fight it and the campaign in Afghanistan. According to figures provided Tuesday by the Department of Defense, 17,228 Americans have been wounded seriously in Iraq. Another 915 have been wounded in Afghanistan. Many of these men and women have lost limbs, incurred severe brain injuries or suffered other disabling wounds. We need to determine quickly whether these veterans' needs are being met and to appropriate what it takes to make sure that they are. That's at least as important as bailing out incompetent car makers.

The American nation owes a debt of honor to all who serve and have served in Iraq and Afghanistan and, particularly, to those who received disabling wounds. Nearly 200,000 injured veterans of the Persian Gulf War have had to wait almost two decades to have the reality of their mysterious wounds acknowledged. They require help and compensation, as does this new generation of warriors.

Even in these troubled economic times, our veterans are entitled to first place in the line of creditors with a claim on our nation's conscience.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲87° ▼79°	▲87° ▼79°	▲88° ▼78°	▲88° ▼78°	▲87° ▼79°

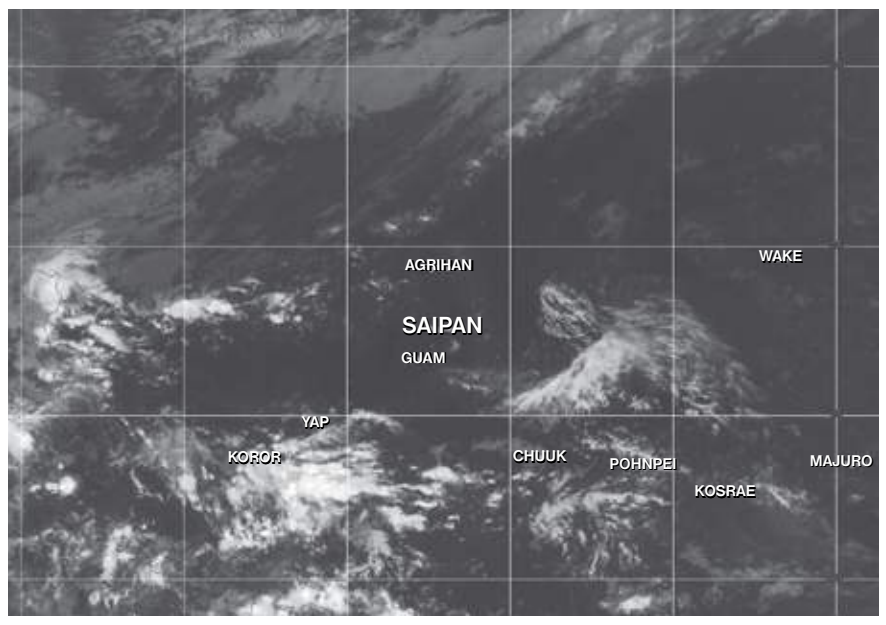
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Showers	▲84	▼77
Palau	Showers	▲85	▼77
Yap	Showers	▲87	▼77
Chuuk	Showers	▲88	▼79
Pohnpei	Showers	▲87	▼73
Kosrae	Showers	▲89	▼78
Majuro	Showers	▲86	▼75

Around The Globe

Auckland	Mostly Cloudy	▲70	▼62
Beijing	Partly Sunny	▲54	▼30
Hong Kong	Cloudy	▲77	▼68
Honolulu	Rain	▲80	▼73
London	Cloudy	▲41	▼34
Los Angeles	Partly Sunny	▲80	▼52
Manila	Showers	▲82	▼75
Melbourne	Showers	▲52	▼49
Miami	Showers	▲74	▼63
New York	Partly Sunny	▲36	▼28
Osaka	Sunny	▲54	▼40
Paris	Cloudy	▲41	▼29
Pusan	Mostly Cloudy	▲57	▼40
Rome	Dreary	▲52	▼33
Salem	Mostly Cloudy	▲50	▼33
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	▲64	▼47
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	▲52	▼34
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	▲57	▼44
Washington, DC	Partly Sunny	▲38	▼28

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, FRIDAY, NOV. 21, 2008
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A shear line extends southwestward from 25N148E to beyond 130E at 16N. Patchy cloud cover and scattered showers extend up to 320 miles in patchy areas northwest of the shearline. A few thunderstorms are occurring from 16N to 17N between 130E and 133E. Convergence near a surface trough extending north-northeastward from 1N137E to 6N139E to 9N139E is triggering scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms over Koror and south of Yap between 2N and 8N from 133E to 147E. A weakening surface trough and trade-wind convergence are producing scattered showers between 3N and 8N from 151E to 160E. This area includes Chuuk and Pohnpei states.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

3:14AM Today	High Tide:	1.4 Feet
9:16AM Today	Low Tide:	0.6 Feet
3:54PM Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
10:47PM Today	Low Tide:	0.5 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:22AM	5:44 PM
Sunday	6:23AM	5:44 PM
Monday	6:23AM	5:44 PM
Tuesday	6:24AM	5:44 PM
Wednesday	6:24AM	5:44 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	1:35AM	1:54PM
Sunday	2:25AM	2:30PM
Monday	3:14AM	3:07PM
Tuesday	4:04AM	3:46PM
Wednesday	4:55AM	4:27PM

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF NOVEMBER 19, 2008

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
Saipan-Rota				**Rota-Saipan**			
CO9597	11:50am	12:25pm	1,7	CO 9598	3:25am	4:00am	5,6
Saipan-Guam				**Guam-Saipan**			
CO9317	5:00am	5:50am	Daily	CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	1,2,3,4,7
CO9313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily	CO9598	2:30am	4:00am	5,6 via Rota
CO9597	11:50am	1:20pm	1,7 via Rota	CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	2,3,4,5,6	CO9600	10:20am	11:10am	Daily
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily	CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily	CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily	CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily
Saipan-Narita				**Narita-Saipan**			
NW 099	5:00am	7:40am	Daily	NW 076	10:15am	2:40pm	Daily
NW 078	8:25am	1:30pm	2,3,4,5,6,7	NW 077	6:25pm	1:25am+1	2,3,4,5,6,7
NW 075	4:55pm	7:30pm	Daily	NW 100	8:45pm	1:15am+1	Daily
Saipan-Osaka				**Osaka-Saipan**			
NW 083	4:30pm	7:20pm	Daily	NW 084	10:40am	3:10pm	Daily
Saipan-Nagoya				**Nagoya-Saipan**			
NW 078	8:25am	11:05am	Daily	NW 077	9:00pm	1:25am+1	Daily
Saipan-Incheon				**Incheon-Saipan**			
OZ 604	2:10am	6:00am	1	OZ 605	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
OZ 604	2:40am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7	OZ 603	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ 606	3:20pm	7:00pm	Daily	OZ 603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6
Saipan-Busan				**Busan-Saipan**			
OZ 608	3:50am	7:20am	1,4,5,7	OZ 607	9:30pm	2:40am+1	3,4,6,7
Saipan-Shanghai				**Shanghai-Saipan**			
FM 844	2:50am	5:40am	2,6	FM 843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1,5
Rota-Guam				**Guam-Rota**			
CO 9597	12:50pm	1:20pm	1,7	CO 9598	2:30am	3:00am	5,6
Guam-Manila				**Manila-Guam**			
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	3,5 via Koror	CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	3,5 via Koror
CO 933	8:00pm	9:40pm	Daily	CO 934	11:10pm	4:40am+1	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:50am	1,2,4,6,7	PR 110	10:10pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:
- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

POLICY

- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

CUSTOMER SERVICE For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Sunday, *Saipan Tribune* offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $182. Off-island subscription rate is $376 per year. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

Schedule of Religious Services

CATHOLIC

Mt. Carmel Cathedral
Sunday Mass: 6am, 9am, 11am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm

Korean Center
Sunday: 10:30am
Wednesday: 10am
Thursday-Friday: 8pm
Saturday: 3pm and 7:30pm

Kristo Rai Parish
Sunday Mass: 6am, 8am and 9:30am
Monday- Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm
Saturday: 6am and 6pm

Nuestra Senora De Soledad Parish
Wednesday Mass: 6pm
First Friday Healing Mass: 6pm
Saturday Mass: 6pm
Sunday Masses: 7:30am & 9am

Saint Jude Parish
Sunday: 6am, 8am, 10am
Wednesday and Thursday: 6pm

San Antonio Parish
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Tuesday and Friday: 6pm

San Francisco de Borja-Rota
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6pm

San Isidro-Rota
Sunday: 5am and 10am
Monday-Wednesday: 7pm
Thursday-Saturday: 5am and 7pm

San Jose (Oleai) Parish
Sunday: 6am and 7:30am
Tuesday-Wednesday and Friday-Saturday: 6pm

San Roque Parish
Sunday: 9am
Wednesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10:30am

San Vicente Parish
Sunday: 6am, 9am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6pm

Santa Remedios
Sunday: 7:30am
Tuesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10am-Baptism

Santa Soledad
Sunday: 7:30am

PROTESTANT

Born Again Christian (Upper Room Int'l Ministries), Saipan
Wednesday Prayer and Healing Night: 8-10:30pm
Saturday Tagalog Service: 8-10:30pm
Sunday English Service: 9:30-11am
Sunday School for Children: 10-11am
Sunday Filipino Service: 7-9pm

Calvary Baptist Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 9am
Sunday Morning Worship: 10am
Sunday Evening Worship: 6pm
Wednesday Prayer Service: 7pm

Chinese Christian Church of Saipan
Worship Services: Sunday, 10am and 7:30pm
Bible Study: Tuesday-Friday, 9:25pm

Cornerstone Christian Church, Saipan
Worship/Study Opportunities
Adult Sunday School: 9am
Youth Sunday School: 9am
English Worship Service Sunday: 10am
Sunday Service: 5:30pm
Worship/Fellowship Sunday: 9:30pm
Evangelism/Follow-up: Sunday/Monday: 1:30/7:30pm
Worship Team: Monday/Saturday-9pm;
Cell Groups Tuesday: 7:30pm
Mid-week Service: 7:30pm
Prayer Meeting Wednesday: 7:30pm
Leader's Bible Study Friday: 7:30 pm
Cornerstone School of Ministry Saturday: 7:30pm

Episcopal/Anglican Church on Saipan
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Worship Service Sunday: Holy Communion 9:00am
Place: Vicarage, Chalan Laulau,
Call 235-0545 for directions

Grace Christian Assembly, Saipan
Worship Service: 9am
GBI Classes: 4-6pm
Prayer Meeting: Monday-Saturday: 6am
Sunday: 7am
Home Cell Bible Study: Wednesday-Friday: 7pm
Youth Service: Friday: 5:30pm

Iglesia Ni Cristo, Saipan
Wednesday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Thursday: 5:30am (English); 7:45 pm (English)
Saturday: 5:30am (Tagalog); 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Sunday: 6:45am (English)
Children Worship Service: Sunday, 9am (English)

Immanuel United Methodist Church Koblerville
Sunday Services
9:00 AM
Place of the church-next to Mt. Carmel Cathedral on Chalan Kanoa Dr. • Tel: 322-6158
Pastor JJ Matsumoto

Immanuel Methodist Church (Filipino Congregation)
Sunday: 7:00am-Choir Rehearsal
8:00am-Church Service (Tagalog)
9:15am-Sunday School
Wednesday: 6:30pm, home group
8:00pm-Prayer Meeting
Thursday: 7:30pm-Choir Practice (Church)
Saturday: 8:00pm-Choir Practice (Parsonage)

Jesus is Lord Church, Saipan
English Service: 9-11am, Sunday
Tagalog Service: 6-8pm, Sunday

Korean Presbyterian Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 8:20am
Sunday Adult: 10am
Sunday Adult: 11:30am
Sunday Evening: 7:30pm
Wednesday: 8pm

Life in the Son Christian Fellowship, Saipan
Sunday Worship Service: 10am–12noon
Tuesday: Leadership Institute 7pm-10pm
Wednesday: Corporate prayer 7pm-8pm
Last Friday of the month-prayer: 7pm-11pm
Friday: Youth on Fire: 7pm-9pm
Tel. No. 235-LIFE (5433)

Marianas Baptist Church, Saipan
English Worship Service: 9-10:30am
Evening Worship Service: 6-7pm
Children Sunday School: 9-10:30am
Tagalog Sunday School: 11am-12pm
English Sunday School: 11am-12pm
Korean Worship Service: 11am-12pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting:
English, 7pm-8pm
Korean: 8:30pm-9:30pm

Missions Connection Ministry
Every Sunday Celebrations:
10am (English), 6pm (Tagalog)
Wednesday Bible Study: 7pm
Youth Impact Friday: 7pm
Saturday Prayer Meeting: 7pm

Northern Marianas Christian Church
Sunday Worship Service 10am Fina Sisu Housing FS#1 (Child care will be provided)
Friday Services @ 7pm Fina Sisu FS#1 for more info pls. contact Ryan 484-2620

Saipan Bible Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30-10am
Divine Worship: 10am-11:30am
Evening Service: 7pm-8:30pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8pm-9pm

Saipan Christian Church
Sunday: 7:30am-10am
Sunday: 6:30 pm -9pm
Monday: 8 pm -10pm (Prayer Meeting)
Thursday: 8pm-10pm (Cell Groups)

Saipan Church of Christ
Sunday Bible Class: 9am
Sunday Worship: 10am
Sunday Worship English: 6pm
Sunday Worship Tagalog: 7pm
Wednesday Bible Study: 7:30pm

Saipan Community Church
(Sunday Services)
Palau Service: 7:30am-9am
English Service: 10am-11:30am
Chuukese Service: 1pm-2:30pm
Filipino Service: 5:00pm-7:00pm

Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Saipan
(Saturday Church Services)
Sabbath School Program: 9-10am
Lesson Study: 10-10:40am
Divine Service: 11-12pm
Visitation: 3-4pm
Adventist Youth Program: 4:30-5:30pm
Sundown Worship: 6-7pm

First Baptist Church
(Formerly Saipan Baptist Church)
Afetna St., San Antonio

Sunday		
	9am	Sunday school
	10am	Regular worship
	6pm	worship
Wednesday		
	7pm	worship

Everyone is warmly welcome to attend our worship services. Transportation is readily available to anyone who needs a ride to our church. For further information, please call Pastor David M. Mclure at 234-1939/235-7779.

Thy Word Ministries Saipan Faith Center
Phone 234-0209
New Christian Charismatic Church Service located in Chalan Paio, Beach Road in the Sablan building on the 2nd floor above Subway Sandwiches.
Senior Pastors: George & Gail Kamakahi
Asst. Pastors: Eric & Penny Sakaguchi
Service Times
Sunday 10:00am Worship Service
Sunday 7pm Discipleship Classes
Tuesday 10:00am Bible Studies
Tuesday 6:00pm Intercessory Prayer
Tuesday 7:00pm Music Practice
Wednesday 7:00pm Mid-Week Service
Saturday 10:00am Evangelism

Upper Room International Ministries

Sunday	5:30am-6:30am	
Morning prayer		
	7am-9am	English service
	7am-9am	Sunday school
	10am-12noon	English service, Koblerville
Wednesday	7pm-9pm	Prayer meeting
Saturday	7pm-9pm	Tagalog service

Venue: Jason Presbyterian Church
Gualo Rai, Saipan

Victory Chapel Christian Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30am
Sunday AM Worship:10:30am
Sunday PM Worship:7:00am
Wed Worship: 7:30pm
Prayer 45 min. Prior to Service Times
Morning Prayer: 6-8am M-S

Flashback
A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

November 22, 1999

NMIRF junks plan to raise gov't share
The NMI Retirement Fund Board has abandoned a recommendation to increase by 2 percent the government's contribution for its workers in order to help the current administration cope with dwindling cash resources, according to Administrator Juan S. Torres. An actuarial study had proposed to hike the share pitched in by the government to 26 percent from 24 percent to keep the NMIRF financially sound. "The board had been mindful of the predicament this government is in and decided unanimously to forego the recommendations of the actuary," Mr. Torres said.

Continental drops CNMI from marketing list
Continental Airlines, Micronesia's largest air carrier, has dropped the Northern Marianas from the list of "tropical island getaways" it is promoting as Pacific island resort destinations in the region. The exclusion of CNMI from the list came months after Continental scaled back flights to Saipan from key cities in Japan, the main source of visitors of the island government, due to declining passenger haul. In its OnePass Update, a newsletter Continental sends to OnePass members, it listed 11 island destinations in the Western Pacific, except Saipan, that it is recommending as vacation sites.

November 22, 2000

Social Security trust fund faces depletion
Federal officials are beefing up efforts to address the anticipated depletion of U.S. Social Security trust funds in order to ensure social security benefits are continuously made available to Americans both in the mainland and in the CNMI. U.S. Social Security Administration Manager Michael G. Newman told a Saipan Rotary Club luncheon at the Hyatt yesterday that there are about 3,000 individuals in the CNMI who are active recipients of social security benefits today. The SS trust fund, which currently holds at about a trillion dollars, is projected to continue sustaining the delivery of benefits to the system's millions of beneficiaries until the next 25 years, disclosed Mr. Newman.

Arrivals from Japan down 12 percent
In the wake of a travel advisory issued by Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs warning its nationals on the rising criminality in the CNMI, visitor arrivals from Japan dropped 12 percent for the month of October compared to the same period last year. But the Marinas Visitors Authority reported that arrivals for the month of October totaled 40, 423, a slight decline of 1.27 percent compared to October 1999. MVA attributed the drop in visitor arrivals from Japan to the low load factor in the direct services and lack of extra flights in October 2000. In October 1999, there were three extra flights from Japan that came to the CNMI.

November 22, 2001

Dela Cruz eyed as next Senate VP
Senate President Paul A. Manglona will be the only familiar face in the incoming Senate leadership, as the Tinian senatorial delegation poises to claim first dibs on other leadership positions in the upper chamber. Flexing their numerical superiority, the Tinian and Rota senatorial delegations have come to an unofficial agreement with other senators to confer upon Sen. Jose Dela Cruz the next Senate vice presidency. The other Tinian senator, Sen. Joaquin G. Adriano, will then be the next Senate Floor Leader. Sen. Ricardo S. Atalig stressed, however, that these are all still unofficial, as preparations are still being made in the upper chamber on the selection of its next leaders.

Lower court misconstrued Family Protection Act—SC
The Supreme Court reversed an April 2000 Superior Court ruling that granted a Tanapag resident a restraining order against her neighbor, citing that the lower court's decision was a misinterpretation of the Family Protection Act. In a seven-page opinion, Chief Justice Miguel S. Demapan with justices Alexandro Castro and John A. Manglona, stated that the Superior Court misinterpreted the scope and definitions contained in the FPA, which they fear may be repeated if not rectified by the high court. The three-member appellate panel moved to vacate the lower court ruling in that the conflicting parties in the case were not related.

Business

Dems put off auto bailout vote, seek plan from Big 3

Pelosi

WASHINGTON (AP)—The $25 billion rescue plan for the auto industry, desperately sought by Detroit's beleaguered Big Three, collapsed Thursday as Congress drew the line at one more bailout and Democrats said they wouldn't even consider it until the companies produced a convincing plan for rebuilding their once-mighty industry.

The demise of the rescue—at least for now—left uncertain the fate of General Motors Corp., Ford Motor Co. and Chrysler LLC, and sent Wall Street spiraling to its lowest level in years. The Dow Jones industrials dropped 445 points, the second straight plunge of more than 400, and hit the lowest point in nearly six years.

The carmakers have been clobbered by lackluster sales and choked credit, and are battling to stay afloat through year's end. Failure of one or more of the Big Three would be a severe further blow to the floundering economy—and to many Americans' view of the nation's industrial strength—and throw a million or more additional workers off the job.

Just Thursday, the government reported that laid-off workers' new claims for jobless aid had reached a 16-year high and the number of Americans searching for work had soared past 10 million. Congress approved a measure to extend jobless benefits through the holidays, and the White House said President George W. Bush would quickly sign it.

Rejection of the latest bailout plan by House leaders postponed until next month a politically tricky decision for the Democratic Congress on whether to approve yet another unpopular emergency plan at a time of economic peril, or risk being blamed for the implosion of an industry that employs millions and has broad reach into all aspects of the U.S. economy.

"Until they show us the plan, We cannot show them the money," Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., said at a hastily called news conference in the Capitol.

GM and Ford quickly issued statements promising to submit the blueprint the Democrats demanded.

Pelosi and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., said Congress might return to work in early December for a vote on aid to the carmakers—but only if they show Congress they could use the funds to transform their struggling industry into a viable one.

Congress extends jobless benefits, stocks still sink

WASHINGTON (AP)—Jarred by new jobless alarms, Congress raced to approve legislation Thursday to keep unemployment checks flowing through the December holidays and into the new year for a million or more laid-off Americans whose benefits are running out.

The economic picture was only getting worse, if Wall Street was any indication. The Dow Jones industrials dropped more than 400 points for a second straight day, reaching the lowest level in more than five years, and the Standard & Poor's 500 index fell below lows established six years ago.

The Senate's vote followed Thursday's government report that laid-off workers' new claims for jobless aid had reached a 16-year high and the number of Americans searching for work had surged past 10 million.

The White House, which had opposed broader legislation containing the benefits extension, urged passage of the new version and said President George W. Bush would quickly sign it.

As Congress prepared to leave town—perhaps for the year—there was no such resolution on helping the auto industry, a disaster in the making that could lead to hundreds of thousands if not millions of additional lost jobs. Democratic leaders said they could return to Washington in mid-December to vote on rescue loans if the carmakers first present a plan on transforming and modernizing their operations.

Discouraged by the stalemate over auto aid, investors sent the Dow Jones industrials down to another big loss, 445 points.

As for the jobless benefits, about 1.2 million people would exhaust their unemployment insurance by the end of the year without the extension, sponsors said. The measure is estimated to cost about $5.7 billion, although economists put the positive impact at $1.64 for every dollar spent on jobless benefits because the money helps sustain other jobs and restores consumer confidence.

Nation

ACROSS THE NATION

Astronauts end 2nd spacewalk at space station

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP)—Spacewalking astronauts performed more repair work on a jammed joint at the international space station on Thursday, keeping a tight grip on all their tools so nothing would get away this time. A $100,000 tool bag was lost during the first spacewalk of the mission two days ago. To everyone's relief, Heidemarie Stefanyshyn-Piper and Shane Kimbrough deftly stepped through their work without any mishaps. They had double- and triple-checked their equipment before venturing out to make certain everything was tied down. As they packed up their tools to go back inside, Stefanyshyn-Piper said, "Hopefully, I won't lose anything on the way." She didn't. Mission Control and astronauts inside the space station complimented the astronauts on the spacewalk, which lasted 6 hours, 45 minutes. There were two small hitches at the end: Kimbrough had elevated levels of carbon dioxide in his spacesuit and also had trouble communicating with Mission Control. Neither problem put the astronaut in jeopardy.

3 US airports open new runways amid economic woes

CHICAGO (AP)—Planes began taking off from new multimillion-dollar runways at three U.S. airports on Thursday with aviation officials heralding the increased capacity as crucial to reducing delays, even in the face of a slumping economy and a projected decline in domestic flights this winter. More than $450 million was spent on the runway at Chicago's O'Hare International; approximately $350 million went into the runway at Dulles International, just outside Washington, D.C.; and more than $1 billion went toward Seattle-Tacoma International's new strip. "Aviation has always been a growing industry," said acting Federal Aviation Administration Director Robert Sturgell, who traveled to all of the opening ceremonies with Transportation Secretary Mary Peters. "We're building for the future." O'Hare inaugurated the vital global hub's first new runway in nearly 40 years when a plane carrying Mayor Richard Daley and other officials touched down Thursday on the stark white concrete.

Witness recalls last messages in MySpace hoax case

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Upon hearing about the suicide of a 13-year-old neighbor, a Missouri woman ordered her business assistant and daughter to delete the Internet account they are accused of using to harass the girl, the assistant testified Thursday. Ashley Grills, 20, told jurors it was her idea to set up a fake MySpace account using the name "Josh Evans" and that she sent the last message from "Josh" to Megan Meier in October 2006 saying that the world would be a better place without Megan. Moments later Megan responded, "You are the kind of boy a girl would kill herself over," Grills said. Megan, who was being treated for depression and attention deficit disorder, hanged herself that day. Grills' testimony came at the trial of her former boss, Lori Drew, who has pleaded not guilty to one count of conspiracy and three counts of accessing computers without authorization. Each count carries a potential sentence of five years in prison. Prosecutors say Drew, 49, her then-13-year-old daughter, Sarah, and Grills created the MySpace alias in September 2006 to befriend Megan to find out if she was spreading rumors about Sarah.

Mukasey collapses during speech

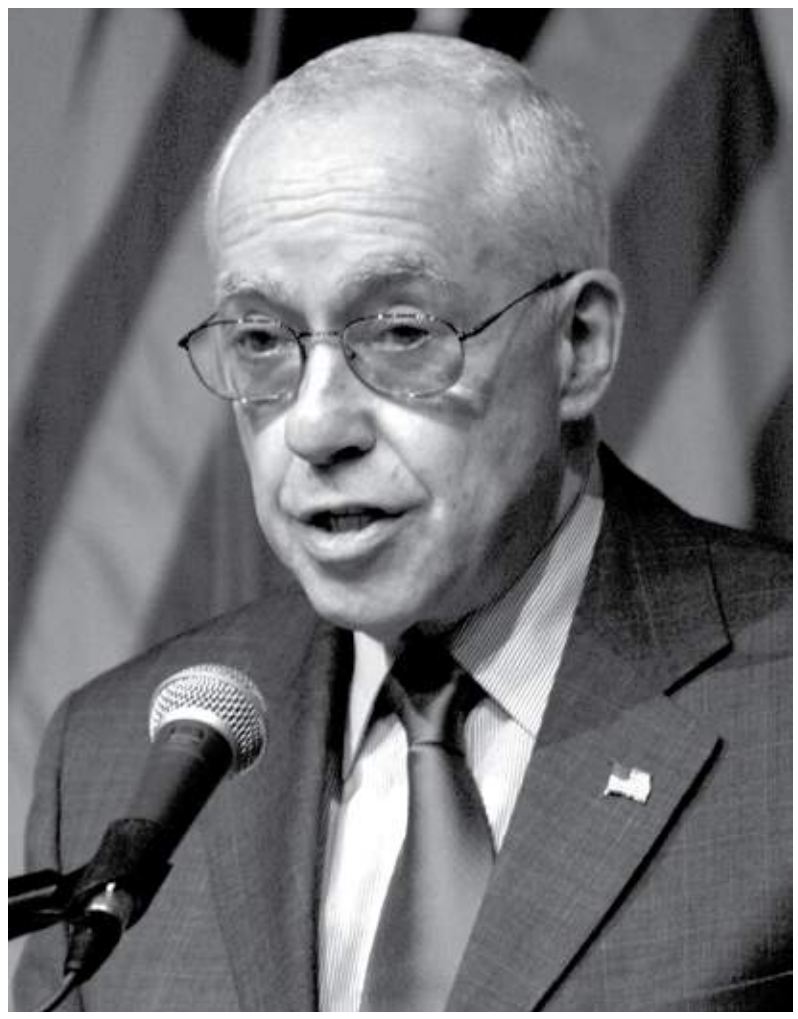
WASHINGTON (AP)—Attorney General Michael Mukasey, the no-nonsense former federal judge who took over the Justice Department after Alberto Gonzales resigned in disgrace, collapsed during a speech Thursday night and was rushed to a hospital after losing consciousness.

"The attorney general is conscious, conversant and alert," Justice Department spokesman Peter Carr said after doctors admitted Mulsasey to George Washington University Hospital for the night.

The 67-year-old Mukasey was delivering a speech to the Federalist Society at a Washington hotel when "he just started shaking and he collapsed," said Associate Attorney General Kevin O'Connor. "They're very concerned."

Later, a senior law enforcement official said Mukasey appeared to be talking when he was taken away. He was conscious during part of the ambulance ride to hospital, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to discuss the situation.

Mukasey, the nation's top law enforcement official, was 15 to 20 minutes into his speech about the Bush administration's successes in combatting terrorism when he began slurring his words. He collapsed and lost consciousness, said O'Connor, the department's No. 3 official, who was traveling at the time and was alerted to what had occurred.



AP

In this Friday, March 28, 2008 file photo, Attorney General Michael Mukasey speaks in San Jose, Calif.

Mukasey's was noticeably shaking during his speech before he collapsed shortly before 10:20 p.m. EST. His security detail called 911.

Mukasey was on the stage for 10 minutes being attended to by his FBI detail before medics arrived, according to a Justice Department official who was there. Mukasey was still breathing at the time, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because she was not authorized to talk to the media.

An FBI official said Mukasey got stuck on a word during his speech at the Marriott Hotel at Wardman Park in northwest Washington, repeated it several times and then "went down hard."

In the prepared remarks of his address to the conservative legal group, Mukasey planned to defend the Bush administration's "fundamental reorganization" of the government since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks and policies put in place to detain terror suspects. He also was planning to talk about the continuing threat of al-Qaida.

President George W. Bush was informed about Mukasey's collapse, press secretary Dano Perino said.

"The president has him in his thoughts and will be kept apprised and hopes that he will be back up and at 'em again soon," she said.

Aides: Obama plans to nominate Clinton

WASHINGTON (AP)—President-elect Barack Obama plans to nominate Hillary Rodham Clinton as secretary of state after Thanksgiving, a new milestone for a former first lady and a convergence of two political forces who contested mightily for the presidency.

Obama transition aides described a process Thursday that appears on track to make Clinton the top diplomat in an Obama administration, just one week after the two first met in secrecy to discuss the idea.

AP

Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, D-N.Y., speaks at a New York Public Transit Association conference in Albany on Friday, Nov. 14, 2008.

The nomination would be a remarkable union between the former first lady who was an early favorite to win the presidency and the first-term senator who upset her in the primary and cruised to a general election victory. Such a high-profile seat in the Cabinet for Clinton also would be another achievement for the most accomplished former first lady in U.S. history, who has been the first presidential spouse to serve in the Senate and run for the White House herself.

Some Democrats and government insiders have questioned whether Clinton is too independent and politically ambitious to be an effective secretary of state. But a senior Obama adviser said the president-elect has been enthusiastic about naming Clinton as secretary of state from the start, believing she would bring instant stature and credibility to U.S. diplomatic relations and that the advantages to her serving far outweighed potential downsides.

The advisers who explained Obama's plans and thinking did so on a condition of anonymity because he was not ready to formally announce his plans.

Report: Records search on Joe the Plumber improper

TOLEDO, Ohio (AP)—An agency director improperly used state computers to find personal information on "Joe the Plumber," a government watchdog said in a report released Thursday.

There was no legitimate business purpose for the head of Ohio's Department of Job and Family Services to order staff to look up the records, Inspector General Tom Charles said.

Investigators weren't able to determine whether the searches were politically motivated, the report said.

"All these searches were done in the midst of a national political campaign," the report said. "But we did not find any evidence that shows the data was accessed or information released in response to media requests in an effort to support any political activity or agenda."

Gov. Ted Strickland suspended the agency director, Helen Jones-Kelley, for a month without pay after reviewing the findings. He rejected a request to fire her.

Earlier this month, Strickland placed Jones-Kelley on paid leave over separate allegations that a state computer or e-mail account was used to assist in political fundraising for Democrat Barack Obama's campaign.

The inspector general's report concluded that she improperly used state e-mail to engage in political activity.

Judge orders release of 5 terror suspects at Gitmo

WASHINGTON (AP)—A federal judge on Thursday ordered the release of five Algerians held at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and the continued detention of a sixth in a major blow to the Bush administration's strategy to keep terror suspects locked up without charges.

In the first case of its kind, U.S. District Judge Richard J. Leon said the government's evidence linking the five Algerians to al-Qaida was not credible as it came from a single, unidentified source. Therefore, he said, the five could not be held indefinitely as enemy combatants, and should be released immediately.

"To allow enemy combatancy to rest on so thin a reed would be inconsistent with this court's obligation," Leon told the crowded courtroom.

As a result, he said, "the court must and will grant their petitions and order their release."

As for the sixth Algerian, Belkacem Bensayah, Leon said there was enough reason to believe he was close to an al-Qaida operative and had sought to help others travel to Afghanistan to join the terrorists' fight against the United States and its allies.

Leon also urged senior Justice Department leaders and high-level officials at other government agencies involved in the case not to appeal his ruling. The Justice Department said later Thursday it had not decided whether it would.

Asia

'No compromise with Tibetan exiles'

AP

Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama, right, confers with Samdhong Rinpoche, Prime Minister of the Tibetan government-in-exile, during a function in Dharmsala, India

BEIJING (AP)—China launched a new attack on the Dalai Lama's drive for Tibetan autonomy on Friday, vowing not to comprise with leaders of the Tibetan exile community meeting to debate the future of their movement.

An editorial in the official Tibet Daily newspaper denounced the Nobel peace laureate's "middle way" proposal that the region be granted control over its internal affairs while remaining a part of China.

It said that approach was tantamount to seeking outright independence for the region, which China insists has been part of its territory for 700 years. Many Tibetans say they were effectively independent for most of that time before Chinese forces invaded shortly after the 1949 communist revolution.

The Dalai Lama's "so-called 'middle way' is a naked expression of 'Tibet independence' aimed at nakedly spreading the despicable plot of opposing the tide of history," the statement said.

The editorial appeared aimed at sending a clear message to exile Tibetans meeting this week that China will not yield in its hard-line approach.

The gathering in the Indian hill town of Dharmsala—the base of the self-declared government-in-exile—has exposed rifts between many young Tibetans who advocate a declaration of independence from China and the older guard, who stand by the Dalai Lama's path of compromise.

The divide was sharpened by a March uprising of Tibetans across western China that marked the biggest challenge to Chinese rule in Tibet in nearly two decades.

Last month's talks between China and representatives of the Dalai Lama produced no progress and in their wake, China has ratcheted up its rhetoric against the Dalai Lama and his proposals. Beijing has sought to portray the spiritual leader as a ruthless autocrat who would carry out ethnic cleansing in Tibetan areas and reintroduce the region's traditional feudal theocracy.

China: 19K students died in May quake

BEIJING (AP)—China acknowledged Friday for the first time that more than 19,000 schoolchildren were among the dead in the massive earthquake that struck Sichuan province in May.

The earthquake left nearly 90,000 people dead or missing, but the government had never said how many of the casualties were students. Most died when their shoddily built elementary and secondary schools collapsed.

Their deaths become a sensitive political issue for the government, with parents of dead children staging protests demanding investigations. Many of the parents have also been subjected to intimidation and financial inducements to silence them.

The student death toll of 19,065 was given at a news conference on preparations for the winter by Wei Hong, executive vice governor of Sichuan.

Wei said that millions of those displaced in the earthquake still need quilts and repairs to their homes if they are to survive the coming winter, expected to be unusually cold.

The earthquake, which was centered in the southwestern province of Sichuan, displaced millions and left China struggling to carry out reconstruction work.

Wei said relief work was important because experts were predicting temperatures would be slightly lower this winter in the area compared to previous years.

"During the post-disaster period of relocations, we have placed at the core the work of making sure that thousands of affected people, especially those living in extremely cold and remote rural areas, will live safely and warmly through this wintertime," Wei said.

Pakistan protests to US over deep missile strike

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)—Pakistan protested to the U.S. ambassador Thursday over a deep cross-border missile strike, and a militant group threatened to target foreigners unless the attacks stop.

Pakistani intelligence officials say the U.S. has staged some 20 missile strikes on Pakistani territory since August, almost all of them aimed at the lawless tribal region along the Afghan border. But for the first time Wednesday, the missiles targeted militants beyond the tribal areas, deeper inside Pakistan. Six suspected insurgents were killed.

The strikes have strained relations between the allies, who are fighting al-Qaida and Taliban militants blamed for attacks on U.S. and NATO troops in Afghanistan as well as within Pakistan. Al-Qaida leaders Osama bin-Laden and his deputy Ayman al-Zawahri are believed to be hiding along the border.

Pakistan, which called the attack a "great provocation," said the U.S. strikes undermine public support for fighting insurgents.

The Foreign Ministry summoned U.S. Ambassador Anne Patterson to protest the strike, the second time she has been called in since August.

"It was underscored to the U.S. ambassador that such attacks were a violation of Pakistan's sovereignty," a ministry statement said. The foreign secretary stressed the attacks must be stopped, it added.

The U.S. rarely confirms or denies involvement in strikes inside Pakistan, which are believed to be carried out mainly by unmanned CIA drones flown from Afghanistan.

Also Thursday, militant leader Hafiz Gul Bahadur warned his men would launch suicide attacks on foreigners and government targets around the country unless the raids stop.

World

World struggles with Somali piracy

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP)—The U.N., African Union and Arab nations struggled to respond Thursday to a surge of pirate attacks, authorizing more sanctions and calling for international peacekeepers to stop Somali sea bandits who appear undeterred by nonviolent tactics.

The economic reverbations of the attacks widened as the world's largest container-shipping company said it would began sending some slower vessels thousands of miles around southern Africa to avoid the perilous waters on the shorter Suez Canal route. Insurance underwriters and brokers said the increased danger off the east coast of Africa was driving up premiums for shipping operators.

The African Union urged the United Nations to quickly send peacekeepers to Somalia but that appeared unlikely anytime soon. A U.N. peacekeeping operation in the early 1990s saw the downing of two U.S. Army helicopters and killing of 18 American soldiers. The U.S. withdrew and U.N. peacekeepers were gone by 1995.

In New York, the U.N. Security Council voted unanimously to authorize its sanctions committee to recommend people and entities who would be subject to an asset freeze and travel ban, measures that may be aimed at local officials suspected of aiding the pirates. But it was unclear how that could affect the pirates, who live off cash ransoms dropped in burlap sacks from helicopters or in waterproof suitcases loaded onto skiffs.

Frightened about a drop in revenue from ship traffic through the Suez Canal, Egypt hosted a meeting of seven Arab nations including Saudi Arabia, which saw pirates seize a supertanker loaded with $100 million worth of crude in the Indian Ocean on Saturday.

The meeting ended with the group recommending the establishment of committees that would meet in Yemen early next year to develop concrete steps to combat piracy, participants said.

One of the few victories against the pirates was chalked up by the Indian navy on Tuesday when the warship INS Tabar sank a suspected pirate "mother ship" in the Gulf of Aden and chased two attack boats.

"It's about time that such a forceful action is taken. It's an action that everybody is waiting for," said Noel Choong, who heads the International Maritime Bureau's piracy reporting center in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. "If all warships do this, it will be a strong deterrent. But if it's just a rare case, then it won't work."

Children dying in Haiti, victims of food crisis

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)—The 5-year-old teetered on broomstick legs - he weighed less than 20 pounds, even after days of drinking enriched milk. Nearby, a 4-year-old girl hung from a strap attached to a scale, her wide eyes lifeless, her emaciated arms dangling weakly.

In pockets of Haiti accessible only by donkey or foot, children are dying of malnutrition - their already meager food supply cut by a series of devastating storms that destroyed crops, wiped out livestock and sent food prices spiraling.

At least 26 severely malnourished children have died in the past four weeks in the remote region of Baie d'Orange in Haiti's southeast, aid workers said Thursday, and there are fears the toll will rise much higher if help does not come quickly to the impoverished Caribbean nation.

Another 65 severely malnourished children are being treated in makeshift tent clinics in the mountainous area, or at hospitals where they were evacuated in Port-au-Prince and elsewhere, said Max Cosci, who heads the Belgian contingent of Doctors Without Borders in Haiti.

One evacuee, a 7-year-old girl, died while being treated, Cosci said, adding: "The situation is extremely, extremely fragile and dangerous."

At a makeshift malnutrition ward at a Doctors Without Borders hospital in the capital, 10 emaciated children were under emergency care Thursday, their stomachs swollen and hair faded by pigmentation loss caused by malnutrition. Several had the puffy faces typical of kwashiorkor, a protein-deficiency disorder.

Five-year-old Mackenson Duclair, his ribs protruding and his legs little more than skin stretched over bones, weighed in at 19.8 pounds, even after days of drinking milk enriched with potassium and salt. Doctors said he needed to gain another five pounds before he could go home.

Dangling from a scale mounted from the ceiling, 4-year-old Venecia Lonis looked as limp as a rag doll as doctors weighed her, her huge brown eyes expressionless, her hair tied with bright yellow bows.

Mackenson's grandmother, who has raised him since his mother died, said she barely has a can of corn grits to feed herself, the boy and her 8-year-old granddaughter each day.

"These things did not happen when I was growing up," 72-year-old Ticouloute Fortune said.

Rural families already struggling with soaring food prices in Haiti, the Western Hemisphere's poorest country, lost their safety nets when fields were destroyed and livestock wiped out by the storms, which killed nearly 800 people and caused $1 billion worth of damage in August and September.

WORLD BRIEFS

Shouting and pounding, Iraqis fight over US pact

BAGHDAD (AP)—Iraq's parliament persevered Thursday in its debate on a proposed security agreement with the United States despite raucous attempts by opposition lawmakers to disrupt proceedings ahead of next week's vote on the deal. The measure, which would keep U.S. forces in Iraq for another three years, has a good chance of passing in the Shiite-led parliament. But the uproar created by loyalists of radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr suggests the pact could remain divisive as the country struggles for reconciliation after years of war. If al-Sadr's group and other legislators opposed to the pact lose by a thin margin in the vote planned for Monday, they might attempt to turn their anti-American message into a defining issue in provincial elections on Jan. 31 and general elections late in 2009. His followers planned a major rally Friday in central Baghdad to protest the security deal, which they view as a surrender to U.S. interests.

Putin grabs spotlight, vows Russia will thrive

MOSCOW (AP)—Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin used a meeting of his powerful political party to take center stage Thursday, casting himself as an indispensable leader even as the global financial meltdown threatens the achievements of his boom-time presidency. At the first congress of his United Russia party since May, when Dmitry Medvedev succeeded him as Russia's president, Putin eclipsed his protege with a rousing speech to party faithful in a massive atrium off Red Square. He acknowledged that Russia could not escape the effects of the international economic turmoil, but said it was well insulated by the riches accrued during his eight-year presidency. He also expressed confidence Russia would do more than just weather the storm. "We can and must come out of the global instability stronger and more competitive," Putin said.

Maharlika

PINOY LIFE IN THE MARIANAS

Saturday, November 22, 2008

5 dead in Diwalwal landslide, more missing

TAGUM CITY, Philippines (AP)—At least five persons were killed and several more are missing when a landslide hit a mining village near Mt. Diwalwal, in Monkayo town, Compostela Valley province Thursday afternoon.

The body of six-year old Crisna Daug was pulled out by rescuers at around 6 p.m. after the landslide hit Sitio (sub-village) Depot, Barangay (village) Upper Ulip, Josephine Frasco, provincial social welfare officer, said.

An Associated Press report quoted rescuer Johannes Fortaleza as saying a mother and her two children were among the bodies pulled out Friday.

Three of the dead are believed to be children, civil defense official Antonio Clomo said.

"Rescue workers have begun searching the rubble but have yet to locate the bodies," Clomo told Agence France-Presse. "We know four people, including three children, are missing."

Village official Glenda Verallio says the landslide, triggered by days of heavy rains, tumbled down the mountain slope, destroying several houses and burying residents as they were walking along a road.

She says one man survived and at least two people were missing but the number could be higher.

Most of the families living in the area hit by the landslide scrape together a living from dangerous, unregulated, small-scale mining.

"The government has declared much of the area a geo-hazard and not suitable for housing," Clomo said.

"The government has told residents that they should leave the area for safer ground during heavy downpours but the warnings are usually ignored."

REY BELGADO

PRAYER VIGIL

Members of the Filipino community on Saipan attend the vigil held this week at the Kristo Rai Church in Garapan for Rose Ann O. Bautista, Hydee G. Garcia, and Ronald H. Carreon, the three victims of the car crash that happened Nov. 16 in Susupe.

7 more Filipinos taken by Somali pirates

MANILA, Philippines—Suspected Somali pirates seemed to have stepped up their hijacking activities as they took on Tuesday another ship with seven Filipino seamen, Department of Foreign Affairs said Thursday.

In a text message, Crescente Relacion, executive director of DFA's Office of the Undersecretary for Migrant Workers Affairs, identified the ship as Hongkong-flagged and Iran-operated M/V Delight.

Citing reports from the Philippine embassy in Nairobi, Relacion said 25-crew ship was hijacked in Gulf of Aden last November 18.

"All crew members are reported unharmed. The incident brings to eight the number of hijacked vessels with Filipino crewmen and to 134 the number of Filipino seamen in Somali pirates' hands," he said.

Relacion said the DFA has instructed the Philippine embassies in Nairobi, Manama, and Tehran to coordinate with ship owners and international maritime authorities on efforts to secure safe release of crew and vessel.

The other seven ships with Filipino seamen held by the pirates are: M/T Centauri, hijacked September 17, with 26 Filipino seamen; M/T Captain Stefanos, September 21, with 17; M/T African Sanderling, October 15, with 21; M/T Stolt Strength, November 10, with 23; F/B Tianyu #8, November 14, with three; M/V Sirius Star, November 15, with 19; and M/V Chemstar Venus, November 16, with 18.

Business sees bleakest Xmas since 2001

By DORIS DUMLAO
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

This may turn out to be the gloomiest Christmas holiday season since the Philippines was gripped by political turmoil after the ouster of Joseph Estrada in 2001.

Amid a global economic crisis, businessmen in the country are expecting the worst fourth quarter in seven years, according to the latest quarterly business confidence survey of the central bank, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP).

For the fourth quarter, the confidence index is at -6.8 percent, defying the usually buoyant Christmas season. However, it improved from -12.9 percent in the third quarter, at the height of the Wall Street shakeout that saw the collapse of investment banking giant Lehman Brothers, the fire-sale of Merrill Lynch and the near-bankruptcy of insurance giant AIG.

"It's slightly higher compared to last quarter although the index remained negative," BSP Director Iluminada Sicat said at a news briefing Thursday.

The improvement this fourth quarter was due to the softening of oil prices, expectations of higher demand during the Christmas season and increased foreign exchange inflows from overseas Filipinos during the holiday season, Sicat said.

The confidence index refers to the percentage share of firms in the survey that expressed an upbeat view minus those that have a negative view. A negative confidence index indicates that enterprises which are bearish outnumber those which are bullish for a given period.

Arroyo son leads Charter change bid

By GIL C. CABACUNGAN JR.
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—A move to amend the Constitution through a constituent assembly is gathering steam in the House of Representatives with President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's eldest child leading the signature drive.

Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo's campaign has secured between 120 and 150 signatures on a resolution calling on the Senate and the House to amend the Constitution by voting jointly and not separately, according to Iloilo Rep. Raul Gonzalez Jr.

"I was approached by Congressman Mikey last week when I just arrived at the session hall. He requested that I sign and when I looked at the papers, this was about Charter change through a constituent assembly," Gonzalez said in an interview.

"Since this was being supported by the administration coalition … I had no hesitation and signed the resolution," he said.

Curiously, Gonzalez and other administration solons who signed the bill do not have a copy of the resolution.

A senior congressman, who requested anonymity, claimed that there was only one copy of the resolution passed around.

? LABOR FRONT

Job categories that merit special attention

By FERDIE PONCE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Q: What are the job categories that, according to the Department of Labor, merit special attention?

A: According to the Public Law 15-108 or the new Labor Reform Law, citizens and permanent residents shall be given a primary preference for employment in the CNMI. Labor says the four job categories that merit special attention are the "A" list, the "B" list, the "C" list, and the "D" list.

■ ■ ■

Q: What job categories fall under the "A" and "B" lists?

A: The new Alien Labor Rules and Regulations state that in the past, certain job classifications were reserved for citizens and permanent residents entirely, or available only on a one-to-one basis with alien workers. The Regulations state that these job classifications under the "A" list continue to merit the most careful attention and emphasis in implementation of the preference for citizens and permanent residents.

Under the "A" list are accounting clerk; bookkeeping clerk; bus driver (including transit, tour, and school bus driver); custodian; hotel front desk clerk; janitor; messenger-courier; receptionist-information clerk; retail trade cashier; secretary (other than legal, medical, and executive); security guard; surface boat operator-motor boat operator; taxi driver-chauffeur; telephone receptionist; and tour guide-escort.

The "B" list are certain jobs, in addition to the "A" list that warrant special efforts to place citizens and permanent residents.

Under the "B" list are accountant; brickmason/blockmason/stonemason; cement mason/concrete finisher; electrician; executive secretary/administrative assistant; heating and airconditioning mechanic; human resource manager; operating engineer and other construction equipment operator; paving, surfacing, and tamping equipment operator; refrigeration mechanic, installer; service station attendant; ship captain, boat captain; stock clerk, stockroom, warehouse, storage yard; truck driver, light or delivery services.

■ ■ ■

Q: What job categories fall under the "C" and "D" lists?

A: "C" list refers to certain jobs that require an orientation or transition period but, after appropriate training or on-the-job training, can readily be filled by citizens and permanent residents.

These are auditing clerk; auto mechanic; carpenter; cook; maintenance building repairer; sales representative; secretary, legal, medical, and executive; stock clerk, sales floor; and warehouse worker.

The "D" list refers to particular jobs that must give preference to citizens and permanent residents in filling any job for which the wage is more than $10 per hour. All jobs for which the wage rate or equivalent salary is $10 per hour or more are included on the "D" list.

These high-paying jobs include assistant manager, housekeeping; customer complaint clerk; diving instructor; financial controller; food & beverage manager; front office manager; guest service manager; inventory controller; kitchen manager; maintenance manager; preschool teacher; sales manager, marketing manager; and station manager.

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US: Troops in RP convoy shot at; no casualties

By HRVOJE HRANJSKI
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—American troops traveling in a Philippine army convoy came under fire this week from suspected Muslim militants on southern Jolo island but there were no casualties, the U.S. Embassy reported Thursday.

Philippine marines and police said the convoy of military vehicles was on its way to inspect an infrastructure project in Indanan town Tuesday when six militants from the al-Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf group opened fire.

Embassy spokeswoman Rebecca Thompson said only one U.S. military vehicle was in the convoy and there were no casualties on either the American or Philippine side.

She did not provide other details.

Regional police director Bensali Jabarani, however, said a militant was killed in the clash.

On Thursday, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo canceled a planned trip to Jolo, but her officials blamed bad weather.

A day earlier, government forces announced the arrest of a suspected Abu Sayyaf bomber accused of being behind a failed attempt to bomb Jolo airport.

Several dozen U.S. troops are stationed on Jolo to provide humanitarian assistance to civilians as well as counterterrorism support to Filipino forces battling the militants. But they rarely have come under attack and are tightly guarded by Philippine troops whenever they venture out of their camp, which is inside a Philippine military base.

Still, there have been consistent intelligence reports from the Philippine police and military indicating the Abu Sayyaf may be planning attacks on American troops in Jolo.

Their presence in the Philippines since 2002 has been a sensitive issue, and they are prohibited by the Philippine Constitution from any combat roles.

The attack highlights the vitality of the Abu Sayyaf, which consists of about 300 militants notorious for kidnappings, beheading hostages and bombings and is on the U.S. list of terrorist groups.

GMA: Cash rewards vs kidnappers

By JIM GOMEZ
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo ordered the military and police Wednesday to offer cash rewards to hasten the capture of Muslim militants behind a spike in kidnappings for ransom.

Arroyo is angered by a rise in kidnappings in some southern provinces, including Jolo and Basilan islands, which were mostly carried out by Abu Sayyaf gunmen and rogue members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said.

"These incidents have not only spread fear and anxiety among the civilian population" but also tarnished the country's image "as a peaceful and safe haven for investment and tourism," he said.

Senior Superintendent Leonardo Espina, who heads an elite anti-crime force, said at least 24 kidnappings for ransom carried out by the Abu Sayyaf and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front have been reported in the country's volatile south so far this year, compared to six cases last year and 11 in 2006.

The militants' victims have ranged from wealthy traders to aid workers in an effort to sow terror and raise funds for guns, ammunition and other rebel supplies, he said.

In one of the latest cases, suspected Abu Sayyaf extremists kidnapped social workers Millet Mendoza and Experancita Hupida in September. They released Hupida last month after her family paid a 2 million peso ($40,800) ransom. Mendoza was freed in Basilan earlier this month after a ransom was paid, though no amount was given, officials said.

Police Chief Superintendent Rodolfo Mendoza, a prominent officer who has made extensive studies on al-Qaida-linked militants in the country, has recommended that paying ransom to radical Islamic groups such as the Abu Sayyaf should be declared a crime to cut off a key terrorist lifeline.

The Abu Sayyaf, which has been blacklisted as a terrorist organization by Washington for kidnappings, bombings and beheadings, has survived largely because of funds from kidnappings and other acts of banditry.

1 dead in QC shootout with cops

By ABIGAIL KWOK
INQUIRER.NET

MANILA, Philippines—An alleged member of the "Donut Gang," which authorities say specializes in robbing the spare tires of vehicles in Quezon City, was shot dead by policemen in an encounter Thursday night, a police official said.

Superintendent Franklin Mabanag, chief of the Quezon City police department Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit, said Roberto Lee, 44, was with two still unidentified companions who were caught by a parking attendant stealing the spare tire of a white Toyoto Fortuner on Kamias Road.

When the attendant shouted at them, the suspects fled in a Toyota Revo towards EDSA.

The owner of the Fortuner filed a complaint with the QCPD, which immediately set up checkpoints in the area.

Around 9 p.m., patrolling elements of the QCPD Anti-Carnapping Unit (QCPD-Ancar) led by Inspector Angelo Nicolas spotted the suspects' vehicle near a Petron gasoline station at the corner of Kalayaan Avenue, triggering a brief chase.

On reaching K-I Street in Barangay (village) Kamias, two of the suspects reportedly fired at the policemen, triggering a brief shootout. Lee was later found with multiple gunshot wounds to the head and body, Mabanag said.

Lee's companions were able to escape, while their vehicle was found abandoned along Salgado Street.

Recovered from the vehicle were MK-2 fragmentation grenades, seven tires of different sizes, a calibre .38 revolver, and empty shells.

PHILIPPINE BRIEFS

9 UP students hauled in for questioning

MANILA, Philippines—Nine students of the University of the Philippines were taken in for questioning by police after they staged a protest against President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo Friday morning. Police Officer 1 Mylene Cabon of the Quezon City Police Department Station 9 said no charges have yet been filed against the students, belying claims by activists. The nine, along with other protesters, staged a rally during the inauguration of the UP-Ayala Land Technical Hub on Commonwealth Avenue, at which Arroyo was guest of honor. As of posting time, the nine remain in police custody, Cabon said. ***(INQUIRER.net)***

Cops charged for Dacer slay nabbed in US

MANILA, Philippines—United States officials have arrested two former police officers facing murder charges for the deaths of publicist Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver Emmanuel Corbito, Justice Undsersecretary Ricardo Blancaflor said Friday. Cesar Mancao and Glenn Dumlao are facing murder charges before the Manila regional trial court. Dacer and Corbito were abducted on November 24, 2000 and were later found dead. ***(INQUIRER.net)***

PULSE ASIA SURVEY:

Fewer Filipinos see selves as 'losers'

MANILA, Philippines—Fewer Filipinos considered themselves to be "losers" or worse off last month than they were last year. Pessimism about the coming year also declined between July and October this year, according to the latest survey by Pulse Asia.

Fifty-eight percent of Filipinos considered themselves to be worse off last month, down from 75 percent in July.

Pessimism in terms of their personal quality of life in the coming year also declined from 64 percent in July, to 44 percent in October, according to Pulse Asia.

Pessimism about the quality of life of most Filipinos in the year ahead likewise dropped from 79 percent to 67 percent.

The survey was conducted from Oct. 14 to Oct. 27, using face-to-face interviews with a multistage probability sample of 1,200 adults. It had a margin of error of plus-minus three percentage points.

Pulse Asia also noted a rise in public optimism regarding quality of life in 2009, both at the personal and national level, especially in Metro Manila and among members of class ABC.

3 in 5 losers

Still, about three in every five Filipinos (58 percent) consider themselves "losers," while about three in every four (78 percent) think that most Filipinos are also "losers" now compared to a year ago.

Pulse Asia said there was "hardly any movement" in the national quality of life this year compared with last year. The percentage of those who think that most Filipinos are losers went down from 84 percent in July to 78 percent in October.

But most Filipinos (67 percent) expect the quality of life of their countrymen to deteriorate in the coming year, when the global economy is expected to slip into recession, results of a survey conducted last month showed.

"Both at the personal and national levels," 44 percent of the respondents said they were expecting their quality of life next year to be worse than now, according to Pulse Asia.

About half of Filipinos (49 percent) believe that the current US financial crisis "may have a great impact" on the Philippine economy.

Most of them feel the crisis would have "disastrous consequences" for Filipinos in general (78 percent) and for their own families (63 percent), Pulse Asia said Thursday in a statement.

Big Makati businessmen believe that the Philippine economy will slide into recession next year and the unemployment rate will shoot up, but Philippine government officials expect only a slowdown.

US financial crisis

The survey found that most Filipinos (69 percent) were aware of the US financial crisis. Across areas and classes, awareness of the US crisis ranged from 55 percent to 90 percent.

Among those who were aware, big majorities (65 percent to 75 percent) across all areas and classes believed that the crisis may have a great impact on the Philippine economy.

Those who believe the US crisis would be disastrous for most Filipinos range from 76 percent to 83 percent, while those who believe it would have adverse repercussions for their own families range from 53 percent to 69 percent.

Gainers, losers

The survey asked respondents to complete the following sentences: "Compared to the past 12 months, can you say that your way of life now is …" and "Compared to the past 12 months, can you say that the way of life of most Filipinos now is …" and were asked to choose from the responses, "better now," "same as then" and "worse now."

Those who answered "better now" were referred to as "gainers," while those who answered "worse now" were referred to as "losers."

The survey also found that "a big majority" of Filipinos (79 percent) considered the national economy to have deteriorated in the past three years, but also noted a decline in the percentages of Filipinos saying the national economic situation "is worse now than in 2005," from 86 percent in July.

"Among the majority saying the state of the national economy has worsened in the past three years, 77 percent strongly felt, 21 percent somewhat felt and only 2 percent did not feel the impact of this deterioration on their own lives," Pulse Asia said.

Worse off now

Asked to compare their personal quality of life today with the previous year, 58 percent said they were worse off now, while 28 percent said it was the "same as then" and 14 percent said their life was "better now."

Majorities across all areas and socioeconomic classes (from 52 percent in Luzon outside Metro Manila to 73 percent in Mindanao) also saw themselves as "losers."

Asked about the quality of life today of the majority of Filipinos compared with the previous year, 78 percent said most Filipinos were worse off now, 18 percent said their lives were the same as then, while only 4 percent said the lives of most Filipinos were better.

Big to overwhelming majorities (from 72 percent to 90 percent) in all geographic areas and socioeconomic classes consider most Filipinos losers.

In terms of their expected change in their personal quality of life, 44 percent are pessimistic, 33 percent expect no change, while 22 percent are optimistic about the year ahead.

Pessimism in Mindanao

Pessimism on the year ahead at the personal level is most pronounced in Mindanao (61 percent), while the level of personal pessimism in the Visayas (55 percent) is also higher than the national figure.

In contrast, pessimism is least manifest in Metro Manila (28 percent), where optimism is also at 34 percent.

However, Pulse Asia also noted "a rise in levels of public optimism" regarding their personal quality of life—from 12 percent to 22 percent—as well as a drop in levels of public pessimism (from 64 percent to 44 percent) between the months of July and October.

"Pessimism becomes less pronounced across all geographic areas and socioeconomic classes during this period," Pulse Asia said.

Pessimism about the quality of life of most Filipinos in the year ahead is at 67 percent, while those expecting life for most Filipinos to be unchanged is at 24 percent. Only 9 percent are optimistic that the national quality of life would be better next year.

Metro Manila most optimistic

This pessimistic sentiment is expressed by majorities across all areas and classes (from 55 percent in Metro Manila to 81 percent in Mindanao). On the other hand, those most optimistic are in Metro Manila (16 percent) and in Classes ABC (16 percent), while optimism is least pronounced in Mindanao (4 percent).

However, as with expectations on their personal quality of life in the coming year, public pessimism about the national quality of life next year likewise declined in almost all areas and classes since July, the survey also showed.

Levels of optimism regarding the lives of most Filipinos in the year ahead also went up in Metro Manila (from 5 percent to 16 percent) and among Classes ABC (from 4 percent to 16 percent) between July and October. ***(Kate Pedroso, Inquirer Research)***

TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR MONEY

Why you need an emergency fund

Editor's Note: This is a partnership between INQUIRER.net and Citibank to help readers handle their personal finances well.

Question: It seems that everyone is nervous about the financial crisis. And I can't help but get nervous too. I keep reading in the newspapers all the negative effects of the crisis – people losing their jobs, their homes, companies closing down and the prices of goods going up. Although I have a regular job, I don't have much savings. How can I better prepare for the crisis? – Arlene M.

Answer: One thing good about the current global financial crisis is that it has "woken up" a lot of people who otherwise have had no thought about financial planning. We all need to manage our wealth well and plan for the future. And there is no better time to do so than now when the economy worldwide is either in recession or in a slump. Our country is no exception.

Saving should be a priority for everyone. When we have put away some funds for the future, it gives us a sense of security, knowing that we can rely on something should any unexpected event occur.

Financial experts have long been advising people to start an emergency fund, and we advise the same. An emergency fund is a money pot that equals three to six months' worth of your living expenses.

Reasons for having an emergency fund

Every person should try to have an emergency fund tucked away. Here are the reasons why:

1. To have a fund to dip into when unexpected events occur. When you lose a job unexpectedly, it may take awhile until you get another job. Having an emergency fund will tide you and your family over until you get a regular paycheck again. The same thing can be done if someone in the family gets sick and racks up a huge medical bill, or unexpected expenses have to be met, such as house or car repairs.

2. To reduce reliance on credit. Relying on credit cards or personal loans from banks to pay unexpected bills due to emergencies can be very costly. The cost of borrowing—also called interest—can be as much as 36 percent or more a year. If you have an emergency fund, you won't need to assume any further burden in the form of interest expense since you will have ready funds at your disposal.

3. To be financially stable. Having an emergency fund will keep you in charge during times of crisis. You won't need to worry about meeting the day-to-day expenses while paying for your emergency costs. And you won't have to miss paying your regular bills either. And even if the economy is not doing great, you will be safe. An emergency fund will thus be for your and your family's peace of mind.

What to do

You mentioned that you don't have much savings. If the amount you have saved so far is not yet enough to cover three to six months' worth of your living expenses, make it a priority to reach this goal.

Start by committing to save every payday. Take a regular amount out of your paycheck as soon as you receive it (say 10 to 20 percent) and before you spend it otherwise. Go over your expenses—you may be able to give up an unnecessary expense to increase your deposit for your emergency fund.

Put this amount in a savings account which is different from your payroll or checking account. As you deposit regularly to this account over the next few months and years, you will see this amount grow to reach your emergency fund goal.

Once you have enough money in your savings account, transfer the money in a higher-yielding account such as a time deposit or fixed income mutual fund or unit investment trust fund. Such investments will enable you to potentially earn more interest while exposing you to a low risk. With your money earning, you will be able to grow your emergency fund more without putting extra hours in your work.

One important thing to remember is to put your emergency fund in liquid investments. That means you should be able to get the money quickly when emergencies happen. Don't invest your emergency fund in things such as real estate or jewelry or fine art as it may be difficult to convert this to cash urgently. Also, don't put your emergency fund in a highly volatile investment such as equities, either by direct investment through a stock broker or through an equity mutual fund or equity unit investment trust fund. Keep the emergency fund accessible and stable as much as you can.

In the US, a lot of people have been laid off or have lost their homes as a result of the financial crisis. Those who have taken the time to build an emergency fund are able to continue on with their lives while they are looking for work and picking up the pieces. Those who weren't able to do so are still in for a rough ride, living on welfare and scrimping as credit has also become tight.

Let's not wait for the worst to happen before we start an emergency fund.

INQUIRER.net and Citibank invite readers to ask questions regarding financial matters. Send your questions to personal_finance@inquirer.net or comment through our personal finance blog called MoneySmarts. Readers are solely responsible for their own investment decisions and should thus conduct their own research and due diligence and obtain professional advice. INQUIRER.net will not be liable for any loss or damage caused by a reader's reliance on information obtained from our web site.

BEAR MARKET AP PHOTO/AARON FAVILA

A Filipino trader massages his head as he takes a break during morning trading at the Philippine Stock Exchange at the financial district of Makati, south of Manila, Philippines on Thursday Nov. 20, 2008. Philippine shares plummeted in step with regional and U.S. markets as the country's central bank pondered whether to cut interest rates to boost the economy. The Philippine Stock Exchange index lost 65.85 points, or 3.45 percent, at 1,842.33. All sectors ended in the red, and decliners outnumbered gainers 95 to 12 while 22 stocks were unchanged.

Maharlika – PinoyStyle

Manila dances to Brown, Rihanna's music

By ERIKA TAPALLA
INQUIRER.NET

TAGUIG CITY, Philippines—Thousands of Filipino fans spent their Sunday evening swaying to the live beats of American pop and R&B artists Chris Brown and Rihanna, who held a joint concert at the Global City open field at The Fort.

The concert opened with dramatic lightshow and a countdown with Brown making a dramatic entrance. Brown was suspended upside down in midair and was slowly lowered to the stage, head first. Masked and dressed in black gear, Brown's dancers immediately started dancing as a flash of light signaled the start of his set.

Brown is a Grammy-nominated American R&B pop singer-songwriter, dancer, music video director and actor. He made his recording debut at the age of 16.

At 19, Brown has had major hits like "Run It," "Say Goodbye," "Kiss Kiss," "With You," "Forever," and "Superhuman."

During the concert, Brown also performed a Michael Jackson medley, which progressed to a hip-hop dance turning the open field into one large outdoor club with people gyrating to the beat.

Brown eventually slowed down and ended with songs, "With You," "No Air," and "Forever," thrilling female fans, as if he was serenading them.

A display of fireworks followed after Brown's set.

After a 20-minute intermission, Rihanna, 20, took the stage with a pulsating heartbeat emanating from the large speakers on stage. As the heartbeat increased and the fans screaming for Rihanna's name, she emerged from the center of the stage with her sexy dominatrix outfit complete with fishnet stockings and sharp boots.

The fans went wild as she explodes into the song "Disturbia."

Rihanna is known for her hits "Umbrella," "Don't Stop the Music," "Shut Up and Drive," "Hate That I Love You," "Unfaithful," "SOS," "Pon de Replay," "Take A Bow," and "Disturbia."

A Grammy-award winner, Rihanna has achieved five Billboard Hot 100 hits and has sold over 11 million albums worldwide.

Her distinct voice and music with club music overtone explain how she could easily get thousands of Filipino fans dancing and singing song after song during the concert. To top that, her short dance routines, frequent poses and sprinkle of back bends have charmed and won the hearts of thousands of Filipinos who knew her songs by heart.

Rihanna's great rapport with the audience has seemingly hypnotized the crowd. As if no one cared that during her more sober songs, she could barely sustain high notes. For fans, it did not matter because at her budding age of 20 years, Rihanna was no less than breathtaking.

International pop singer Rihanna performs during a concert with Chris Brown in suburban Taguig, south of Manila, Philippines on Sunday Nov. 16, 2008.

AP

Anne: I have faith in Sam

By MARINEL CRUZ
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—For actress Anne Curtis, there's no telling how soon a broken heart would heal.

She recently ended her two-year relationship with actor Sam Milby. "The split-up was too much for me in the beginning ... I'm slowly coming to terms with Sam's reason for it."

In an interview on the Sunday gabfest "The Buzz," Anne said it was Sam who initiated the breakup.

Anne is thankful that she's very busy with work. She tapes the Kapamilya fantaserye "Dyosa" three times a week, appears on the variety show "Asap '08" every Sunday, and is currently working on the movie "Baler," Viva Films' entry to the 2008 Metro Manila Film Festival in December.

The news is that Sam is now pursuing KC Concepcion.

I don't think so. While we were having problems, it wasn't KC's name that was being mentioned.

Is it more painful for you because he initiated the split?

I understand what he's going through. Pinagdaanan ko rin 'yun...

Is there any hope for reconciliation?

We want to fix our working relationship first, and then our friendship...

What if you and Sam weren't really meant to be together?

People make fun of his reason, but I have faith in Sam.Kahit hindi kami sa huli, he'll still have a special place in my heart.

ABS-CBN: Diether still in Star Magic

MANILA, Philippines—As far as ABS-CBN is concerned, Diether Ocampo is still a contract artist.

According to a short statement provided the Philippine Daily Inquirer, ABS-CBN stressed that Ocampo remained an artist of its talent arm Star Magic and said the network was awaiting a final decision from the actor on transferring to rival network GMA 7.

"Diet remains in Star Magic. We will trust he will make the right choice," the statement said. The network said it will issue a final statement soon.

Ocampo's camp reportedly denied that the actor had already signed a contract with GMA 7, contrary to the Kapuso network's claim of an initialed "long term" agreement.

The actor is a 13-year talent of ABS-CBN, where he is one of the network's premiere actors both in its film and television productions.

He last appeared in the recently concluded ABS-CBN drama "Iisa Pa Lamang," opposite Claudine Barretto and Gabby Concepcion. ***(INQUIRER.net)***

Fixing a broken heart

MANILA, Philippines—Two young actresses talk about bouncing back from a romance gone bad. Karylle, whose three-year old romance with Dingdong Dantes ended recently, says she's has happily arrived at the "acceptance stage." Heart Evangelista, formerly with Jericho Rosales, is one step ahead: She's found a new love.

Amid the drama that erupted after her breakup with Dingdong, singer-actress Karylle went on a two-day retreat at the Assumption House in Baguio.

The retreat proved crucial in her healing, she told Inquirer Entertainment in an exclusive interview. While there, she dabbled in painting—which she had long wanted to do.

"I painted a rainbow [and it turned out] one of the exercises in the retreat was to think of seven things you are grateful for, one for each color of the rainbow." Her realization: "How can I stay depressed, when blessings are coming my way?"

She has a new CD and a digital movie (Lore Reyes' "Lechonero") in the works. She is singing the National Anthem at the Manny Pacquiao boxing match with Oscar De La Hoya in Las Vegas on Dec. 6. On Dec. 14, she moves to ABS-CBN. This, manager Audie Gemora said, marks a new chapter in her life.

How are you feeling now?

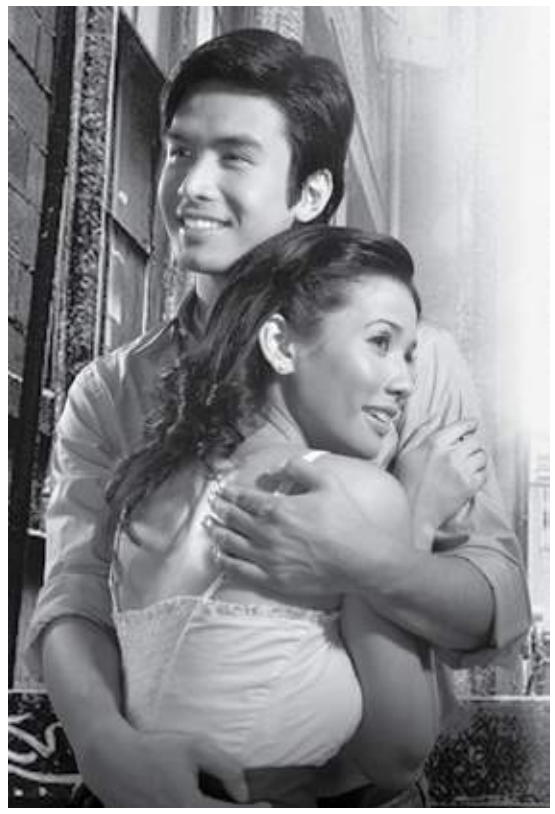
I'm getting a lot of love from family, friends, even strangers.

Your cousin Iza Calzado said you're blooming.

I'm happy na.

You said you went through denial, hurt, anger, bargaining, acceptance. What was the hardest stage?

Anger. I couldn't accept that I was angry. But that's part of the journey. Funny thing was, other people also got angry for me. I ended up comforting them.



Christian Bautista and Karylle pose for a publicity shot related to the new production of West Side Story.

How are you and Dong now?

When I said I didn't love him anymore—I meant the romantic kind of love. But I still care about his welfare and I pray for him.

Can you still be friends?

Maybe in time.

What will happen to your businesses?

Our shares [in the Centerstage videoke joint and Mey Lin restaurant] are separate. The businesses are doing well.

There's a rumor that Marian Rivera [who's being linked to Dingdong] approached you, and you turned away.

That's not true. We had an exchange of words pa raw. My reaction was: I don't talk like that.

How have you changed in the last month?

I feel stronger as a person. I've also become more open to outside help.

Your mom [Zsazsa Padilla] is in the United States. Does she know what happened?

Yes, we're in touch.

What's the best piece of advice from your mom regarding the break-up?

She said I should focus on love that's constant—family, friends. Just having her on the phone was more than enough. She didn't have to say much. All she had to do was listen. (Bayani San Diego Jr./Inquirer.net)

'I love myself more now'

Her breakup with Jericho Rosales in June was also highly publicized. Now, Heart Evangelista told the Inquirer during the launch of her new Kapuso teleserye, "Luna Mystika," she's "happy for the first time in a long while."

She said this was because of Francisco "Kiko" Delgado, 34, scion of a shipping family, whom Heart, 23, has been dating for five months now.

The couple was spotted vacationing on Boracay Island during the Halloween break. Their photos were posted on www.pinoyparazzi.com.

"He's very low-key. That's what I like about him," said Heart. "He's hardworking and is focused on his goals. We're alike in that sense." ***(Marinel R. Cruz/ Inquirer.net))***

Maharlika – Opinion

EDITORIAL

Under probation

As Juan Ponce Enrile achieved the ambition of a lifetime by being elected to the Senate presidency, his past came back to haunt him. To be sure, he tried to portray his victory as the coronation of an unworthy, but in the end, the high point of his political career was overshadowed by the reputation of a lifetime spent as a lackey and an enforcer.

A lackey of whom and enforcer of what? Of Malacañang, of course, and whatever it desires. To be sure, Enrile has never had the reputation of unquestioning, or unthinking obedience. And he would never embarrass himself the way Sen. Manuel "Lito" Lapid became a laughingstock by musing aloud that he'd actually abstained from voting when everyone saw him raise his hand. But even as Enrile declared that the chamber would be independent of the Palace, he also said he saw no reason to oppose debating the Palace's favorite project, which is Charter change.

Which brings us to the new Senate majority that toppled Senate President Manuel Villar and replaced him with Enrile. It was obviously a majority remarkably similar to the majority that elected Villar to the Senate presidency once upon a time and which Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago called a "mutant majority." That is, a majority of convenience, not principle. While armed with a legitimate issue—the question of whether Villar used his position to benefit his own commercial interests, an issue that will be discussed in the Senate ethics committee next week—the new majority was identical to the old one in counting the Palace bloc among its members.

This is the heart of the matter. As far as public opinion and perception are concerned, there is the very real possibility that the Senate reshuffle will only stack the deck in favor of the administration and the officials who have been summoned to testify before its committees. The change in leadership and chairmanships could serve to distract the Senate's attention from its ongoing investigations and leave it susceptible to being caught off guard if the House of Representatives attempts to force Charter change through.

Since genuine idealism seems a rare thing these days among elected officials, we can only surmise that naked ambition will serve to keep the senators on their toes and not play possum in the face of any tactical moves to amend the Constitution or neutralize the investigations that have been started. Even administration senators have to consider their political futures after the Arroyo presidency.

As the late former Senate President Eulogio "Amang" Rodriguez, who provided living proof that not all traditional politicians are bereft of decency or honor, famously said, "In the long of time, we shall success!" Enrile has crowned his political career with the next best thing to the presidency of the country. Since no one is beyond redemption and he redeemed himself once before through his tearful confession of wrongdoing in 1986, he may yet prove to be a dedicated champion of the chamber he now heads.

Philippine Daily Inquirer

One Ponce Enrile

There's someone who's more "malakas" [strongly favored] with all the presidents than Ronaldo Puno and Miriam Defensor-Santiago. That's Juan Ponce Enrile.

Puno was "malakas" with Fidel Ramos, Joseph Estrada, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, and in part with Ferdinand Marcos. Miriam was "malakas" with Cory Aquino, Joseph Estrada and Arroyo. That's chicken. Enrile was malakas with Cory, Ramos, Estrada, Arroyo, and above all Marcos. Hell, he was Marcos' right-hand man.

Of course, only three of those people he was "malakas" with were real presidents. The first and last were/are not. Marcos was not when he became his right-hand man, which was during martial law. But Marcos was so before that, for two terms. That is something Marcos does not share with Arroyo. Pretty much everything else he does.

When Santiago demanded to know why Puno was so "malakas" with all the presidents (she was furious, remembering what Puno did to her in the 1992 elections, which in her view was to rob her of the presidency), her implication was that only someone so unscrupulous, so unprincipled, so opportunistic could possibly manage the feat. That was so because it required either reconciling a slew of conflicting beliefs or having none at all. Her implication further was that his opportunism had been a successful one. He had so gotten into the good graces of his patrons he could commit any crime and get away with it.

Of course, Santiago's fury blinded her to the possibility the same question might be asked of her and the same inferences drawn from it. But surely what applies to both of them applies tenfold to the one person who was far more "malakas" with all the presidents most Filipinos have known in their lifetime?

THERE'S THE RUB
By CONRADO DE QUIROS
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

And so let us ask: Who is Juan Ponce Enrile and how did he manage that feat? Well, the highlights of his long and seemingly unending career include:

He is the one person who triggered martial law by claiming an attempt on his life in the Wack-Wack subdivision in San Juan. Luckily for him (and not so for the rest of his countrymen), he escaped completely unscathed. Later, during Cory's time, while depicting himself in his campaign ads as someone who had been stricken by light on the way to Damascus, he admitted lying about it. But still later, he would deny ever having made that confession despite the fact that the world had heard it, compounding one lie with another lie. That alone would have qualified him to be a dependable ally of Arroyo, as he was of Marcos.

Citing that assassination attempt as a last straw, Marcos plunged the country into deepest darkness. With Enrile as chief executor.

He is the one person who claimed to have mounted EDSA People Power I in 1986 and to have rescued this country from Marcos. It didn't sit well with a people who could not believe he would be so confused about who rescued whom. Or indeed who would be so confused about the difference between rescuer and oppressor. They made Cory their ruler despite his efforts to lay claim upon the crown. For good reason: She embodied EDSA People Power I, she was EDSA People Power I. Enrile was just the tuta who lost out to the mongrel Fabian Ver, and who rebelled against his "amo" [boss] as a result of it. And whom the people rescued from certain death, which gave him a fate worse than death, which was to continue living.

Figuring however, like Santiago afterward, that he had been robbed of the presidency, his boys at RAM mounted one coup after another against Cory, and failed. His boys ended up in jail, spending no small amount of time rueing their sins. He remained free, confined only to rueing lost time.

He is the one person who, along with Santiago and Estrada's boys at the Senate, defended their master with every trick in the book. The same book that reigned supreme during Marcos' time, the book of law without justice. To no avail: The people, and not the senators, ultimately sat as judge and found Estrada guilty, sending him gliding in a lonely boat all the way to San Juan by way of the Pasig River.

Later, Enrile (and Santiago) would take turns goading Estrada's legions to "sugod, sugod" [attack, attack] Malacañang, which those legions did. Several people died in the riots there, at Mendiola. Unfortunately, they did not include Enrile or Santiago. Again, Enrile (and Santiago) would remain free, confined only to ruing lost time.

Not for long. For before you could blink an eye or say "one Ponce Enrile," he (and Santiago) was lovey-dovey with the person he wanted "sugod-sugoded" at Palace by the Pasig.

He is the one person, who still along with Santiago but also now with Joker Arroyo, sought to discredit Jun Lozada, finding nothing wrong with a project that wasn't just full of "bukol" [bulges—a street lingo for overpricing] but of malignant tumors. Indeed finding nothing wrong with the way Lozada was met and "escorted" by armed men and driven around, his fate hanging in the balance, before being delivered into the hands of the La Salle brothers. Well, he had seen worse as executor of martial law.

He is the one person who can be counted upon to thwart the "Joc-Joc" Bolante hearing, endorse Charter change, and keep Arroyo in power after 2010. Since he can no longer be king himself at 84 (though I hope age hasn't dimmed his ambitions in that respect, if only so that he would collide with his current patron), he will be a queen-maker, or a queen-retainer. Along with Prospero Nograles, he will have Arroyo controlling both houses of Congress.

The senators who ousted Manuel Villar say Villar is not fit to lead them, his hands being tainted by corruption. They would rather have someone infinitely cleaner. They would rather have someone infinitely more progressive and democratic and libertarian. They would rather have someone this country can respect and trust and look up to.

They would rather have—one Ponce Enrile.

He is the president of the Senate today. He is master of the house today.

And he is back home, the right-hand man once again of another Marcos.

Torture

Whenever you see traffic policemen or enforcers lying in wait or hiding midway along a one-way street, one word comes to mind: "kotong." One would assume that prevention should be the option rather than punishment, but then that does not generate income. If a traffic enforcer stands at the beginning of a one-way street and waves the unsuspecting or stubborn motorist the correct way, there is no need for a ticket, fine and seminar. No need for a bribe.

Erring motorists flagged down by corrupt traffic cops or deputized "alalay" [aides] used to be asked the odd question, "Sino'ng abogado mo?" [Who is your lawyer?] The clueless ask why they need a lawyer for a minor traffic infraction, so the corrupt cop then makes clear that the question is a polite way of asking for a bribe. The "lawyers" refer to various faces on the different denominations in our paper money. It is a way for the motorist to make an offer or haggle for a comfortable amount.

LOOKING BACK
By AMBETH OCAMPO
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Remember nobody takes coins, so the heroes of the 19th century—Rizal, Mabini, Bonifacio—cannot act as "abogado." Thus, Quezon means P20, Sergio Osmeña is worth P50, Manuel Roxas P100 and, God forbid, Aquino has a face value of P500. At today's rate, Quezon and Osmeña will get you nothing, except a traffic ticket. Roxas might get you off the hook if you are lucky. Aquino often does the trick but, if you intend to haggle, then use Macapagal, who is worth P200. If you want a "Get out of jail" card like those in the famous board game Monopoly, you will need three "lawyers": Abad Santos, Lim and Escoda who are on the P1,000-bill. Estrada is on the P2,000-bill but these limited-edition bills, while legal tender, are best kept for numismatic collectors and are probably worth more than their face value.

Looking at the "ube" ice cream colored Roxas bill recently, I remembered the controversy it sparked when it was first issued. Rabid nationalists objected to the American Stars and Stripes on our money. Why, they argued, is a foreign flag on our currency?

It was a valid point that missed two bits of history. First, if you take the trouble to read the Declaration of Independence from Spain that our founding fathers read from the window of Emilio Aguinaldo's home in Kawit, Cavite on June 12, 1898, you will find that the colors of our flag—red, white and blue—are mentioned. Every school child knows the symbolism for these colors: red for bravery, white for purity, and blue for peace. There seems to be nothing assigned to yellow or gold, the colors of the eight-pointed sun and the three stars. Nationalists will be disappointed to discover that according to the 1898 Declaration of Independence, the red, white and blue in our flag, our national symbol, were based on the same colors as those in the American flag! Little wonder the author of that text was never given an important office in the First Republic.

Second, if you look at the Roxas bill, there is no text to explain the context of the offensive flag. It is presumed that everyone knows that the two flags on the bill come from a significant scene in Philippine history. On July 4, 1946 when the United States recognized the independence of the Philippines, the American flag that flew over the islands for almost 50 years was finally lowered, and our flag was raised—proof that we were, finally, a free and independent nation. On that day, Emilio Aguinaldo, a living relic of the Philippine Revolution, was quoted as saying, "Isinauli lamang nila ang kalayaang ating nakamit noong 1898." ["They only returned the freedom we had won in 1898."]

Aguinaldo was still alive when President Diosdado Macapagal moved our Independence Day from July 4 to June 12. The Philippine-American War puts this part of our history in context.

In the San Francisco Presidio exhibit "War and Dissent" is a disturbing picture showing the use of "water cure" on a Filipino being interrogated by American soldiers. The procedure is simple: Water (salty or dirty) is forced down a prisoner's mouth, and then when the victim's stomach is full and bloated, someone jumps on it, forcing the water out. This is repeated until the victim spills the beans. I have read the transcripts of US congressional investigations on this and was horrified that sometimes this torture was done under medical supervision so that the victim was pushed to his limits but kept alive. Despite being a century old, this painful part of the Philippine-American War gains renewed resonance because of the use of torture in our times, in later wars.

To be fair and balanced though, there is an old photograph of small models showing the various forms and types of torture used by the Spaniards on Filipinos during their watch. Torture was used by all sides in those wars. A disgusted Apolinario Mabini denounced its use, and said it was more humane to carry out a swift execution than slow torture.

The Philippine-American War has long been swept under the rug. To study it makes us realize that history does not repeat itself. We have not progressed much in the past century. History does not move by itself; rather it is we who repeat.

What one should learn from history is not the names, dates and places better used for game shows and crossword puzzles. The real challenge is to recognize and break the historical cycle.

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu.

Maharlika – Samu't Sari

Photo by:
REY BELGADO

BIRTHDAY GIRL
Birthday celebrant Melissa Lavarias, standing second from right, poses with Ador and Lina Dimaano and other guests during her birthday party held Nov. 2 at the Fiesta Resort and Spa Saipan.

Birthday celebrant Melissa Lavarias poses with Susan Espanillo of Tan Holdings Legal Department, standing left, and other guests during the celebration of her 21st birthday Nov. 2 at the Fiesta Resort and Spa Saipan.

Melissa Lavarias poses with guests and friends during her 21st birthday celebration at the Fiesta Resort and Spa Saipan on Nov. 2.

Birthday celebrant Melissa Lavarias poses with her mom, Mila Lavarias of RMS, Susan Espanillo, Celso Agui, and Mang Bert from RMS.

HALLOWEEN
Families pose for a picture after celebrating Halloween at the Fiesta Resort and Spa Saipan on Oct. 31, 2008.

NEW NURSES
New graduates of the Emmanuelle College during the graduation ceremony held Nov. 15 at the Fiesta Resort and Spa's Hibiscus Hall.

VIGIL
I-Tech Technician manager Munho Kim is flanked by Shirley Monje Villagomez and Jov Chavez after the vigil held at the Kristo Rai Church in Garapan for Rose Ann O. Bautista, Hydee G. Garcia, and Ronald H. Carreon, the three victims of the car crash Nov. 16.

Friends of Rose Ann O. Bautista, Hydee G. Garcia, and Ronald H. Carreon pose for a picture after the vigil held at the Kristo Rai Church in Garapan.

Mary Anne Atalig, sister of Hydee G. Garcia, and her husband Javier Atalig after the vigil held at the Kristo Rai Church in Garapan. Mary Anne is shown here carrying a picture of Hydee.

YoungStyle

Delay of 'Half-Blood Prince' to 2009 changes opening-date strategy for rival movie studios

THE WASHINGTON POST

Michael Gambon, left, and director David Yates, far right, film a scene for the sixth Harry Potter film, "Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince." Gambon plays Albus Dumbledore in the movie, now scheduled to be released July 17, 2009.

By VALERIE STRAUSS
(C) 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON—In the world of Harry Potter, Wizard's Chess is a magical game in which the pieces move themselves when a player tells them what to do. In the world of Hollywood, a different kind of chess game is being played, with Harry Potter as the king.

It all started with "Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince," the sixth movie in the most popular film series ever.

It was supposed to open this Friday, a good date for movie premieres because it is the weekend before Thanksgiving.

But then Warner Brothers Studios decided to release the film next summer instead. Potter fans got angry, but other movie studios became excited. Realizing they would not have to compete with Harry Potter, they started moving around the opening dates of their own movies.

The whole drama showed how Hollywood executives carefully plot when to release movies.

"It's a big chess game. The date that a movie opens is crucial," said movie analyst Paul Dergarabedian. A studio "can't control audience behavior. But it can decide when (a movie) opens."

Moviemakers believe their best chance to get the biggest audiences is the first weekend, Dergarabedian said. He runs a company called Media by Numbers that tracks movie ticket sales.

The best opening dates are around holidays and during the summer. So when Warner Brothers officials first set Nov. 21 as the date to open "Half-Blood Prince," they knew that was one of the busiest movie times of the year for a sure hit.

After all, the five Harry Potter movies released so far have all been among the top 25 worldwide box-office moneymakers, raking in about $4.5 billion.

But when Warner Brothers made its plans for the sixth Potter film, it didn't know that another of its movies, "The Dark Knight," released July 17, would become one of the most successful movies ever.

Studio officials said they realized they were happy with one blockbuster this year and wanted to try to make sure they had one next year. So on Aug. 14, they pushed back Harry Potter—to July 17, 2009.

Angry Potter fans protested, but other movie studios saw an opportunity:

- Hours after the Potter move, Walt Disney Studios moved the opening of the animated 3-D comedy "Bolt" (about a dog who thinks he has superpowers) from Nov. 28 to this Friday.
- The next day, Summit Entertainment moved the vampire movie "Twilight" from Dec. 21 to this Friday.
- Jeffrey Katzenberg, head of DreamWorks Animation, called the Potter move "the single greatest Christmas gift ever in my 35 years in the movie business." Why? Because there will be less competition for "Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa," which earned $118 million in its first two weeks.
- "Land of the Lost," which was supposed to open July 17, 2009, was moved to June 5 by Universal Studios.

Why? To avoid competing with Harry Potter, of course!

THE WASHINGTON POST

Daniel Radcliffe and Emma Watson return as Harry Potter and Hermione Granger in "Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince." The sixth movie in the popular film series was to have opened Friday, but its opening date has been pushed back to July 17, 2009.

BOX-OFFICE BEHEMOTH

The Washington Post

All five released Harry Potter films are among the most popular of all time at the box office around the world:

2001: No. 5 "Sorcerer's Stone" ($969 million)

2002: No. 14 "Chamber of Secrets" ($866 million)

2004: No. 22 "Prisoner of Azkaban" ($789 million)

2005: No. 11 "Goblet of Fire" ($892 million)

2007: No. 7 "Order of the Phoenix" ($937 million)

Source: International Movie Database

MOVIE FACT

The movie that has made more money that any other is "Titanic." The 1997 film about the ill-fated ship has made almost $2 billion. ***(The Washington Post)***

What's next for J.K. Rowling and Harry Potter

(c) 2008, The Washington Post

What's Next

"Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows," the seventh and last book in the series, is being divided into two movies. The first is scheduled to be released in November 2010, and the second part in May 2011. Studio officials said this schedule would not be affected by the delay of "Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince."

Movie No. 6: What We Know

■ "Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince" is almost done. But the movie will not be completely finished until shortly before the release in July to avoid leaks.

■ The book has an important battle involving Harry Potter, Draco Malfoy, Severus Snape and Albus Dumbledore, but it won't be in the movie. It's too much like the climactic battle in the previous Potter film, the producer has said.

Will J.K. Rowling Write More About the World of Harry Potter?

She already has.

Early this year she wrote an 800-word prequel, a work of events that happened before another story, that was auctioned for charity. It sold for nearly $50,000 to an anonymous bidder.

The story is set three years before Harry's birth. In the tale, friends Sirius Black and James Potter, Harry's father, get into trouble but escape with magic. You can read it at www.mugglenet.com/app/news/full(underline)story/1684.

Rowling's "The Tales of Beedle the Bard" goes on sale Dec. 4. It was mentioned in "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows," when Hermione Granger learns that Dumbledore left her the children's storybook in his will.

As for an eighth Potter book, nobody knows what Rowling will do. For years she insisted that she would write only seven. Then, late last year, she hinted that she might write another one—but not for 10 years! And, she said, she isn't sure that Harry would be the main character.

Sources: Internet Movie Database, MuggleNet, Time.com

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Twilight
Friday 4:25 7:30 10:00
Saturday 1:30 4:25 7:30 10:00
Sunday 1:30 4:25 7:30
Mon and Tues 4:25 7:30
Wednesday 4:25 7:30 10:00
Thursday 1:30 4:25 7:30 10:00
Kristen Stewart, Robert Pattinson
Drama, Thriller • Rated PG 13
Synopsis
Bella Swan has always been a little bit different, never caring about fitting in with the trendy girls at her Phoenix high school. When her mother re-marries and sends Bella to live with her father in the rainy little town of Forks, Washington, she doesn't expect much of anything to change. Then she meets the mysterious and dazzlingly beautiful Edward Cullen, a boy unlike any she's ever met. Edward is a vampire, but he doesn't have fangs and his family is unique in that they choose not to drink human blood.

Bolt
Friday 4:15 7:00 9:30
Saturday 1:10 4:15 7:00 9:30
Sunday 1:10 4:15 7:00
Mon and Tues 4:15 7:00
Wednesday 4:15 7:00 9:30
Thursday 1:10 4:15 7:00 9:30
John Travolta, Miley Cyrus
Action, Animated • Rated PG
Synopsis
For super-dog Bolt, every day is filled with adventure, danger and intrigue--at least until the cameras stop rolling. When the star of a hit TV show is accidentally shipped from his Hollywood soundstage to New York City, he begins his biggest adventure yet--a cross-country journey through the real world to get back to his owner and co-star, Penny.

★ ★ ★

Quantum of Solace
Friday 4:20 7:05 9:35
Saturday 1:05 4:20 7:05 9:35
Sunday 1:05 4:20 7:05
Mon and Tues 4:20 7:05
Wednesday 4:20 7:05 9:35
Thursday 1:05 4:20 7:05 9:35
Daniel Craig, Judi Dench
Action, Adventure • Rated PG 13
Synopsis
Betrayed by Vesper, the woman he loved, 007 fights the urge to make his latest mission personal. Pursuing his determination to uncover the truth, James Bond and M interrogate Mr. White who reveals the organization which blackmailed Vesper is far more complex and dangerous than anyone had imagined. Forensic intelligence links an Mi6 traitor to a bank account in Haiti where a case of mistaken identity introduces Bond to the beautiful but feisty Camille, a woman who has her own vendetta.

Madagascar Escape 2 Africa
Friday 4:10 7:25 9:40
Saturday 1:20 4:10 7:25 9:40
Sunday 1:20 4:10 7:25
Mon and Tues 4:10 7:25
Wednesday 4:10 7:25 9:40
Thursday 1:20 4:10 7:25 9:40
Ben Stiller, Chris Rock
Comedy, Animated • Rated PG

Role Models
Friday 4:30 7:15 9:55
Saturday 1:25 4:30 7:15 9:55
Sunday 1:25 4:30 7:15
Mon and Tues 4:30 7:15
Wednesday 4:30 7:15 9:55
Thursday 1:25 4:30 7:15 9:55
Seann William Scott, Paul Rudd
Comedy, Drama • Rated R

High School Musical 3
Friday 4:00 7:10 9:45
Saturday 1:15 4:00 7:10 9:45
Sunday 1:15 4:00 7:10
Mon and Tues 4:00 7:10
Wednesday 4:00 7:10 9:45
Thursday 1:15 4:00 7:10 9:45
Zac Efron, Ashley Tisdale
Musical • Rated G

Eagle Eye
Friday 4:05 7:20 9:50
Saturday 1:00 4:05 7:20 9:50
Sunday 1:00 4:05 7:20
Mon and Tues 4:05 7:20
Wednesday 4:05 7:20 9:50
Thursday 1:00 4:05 7:20 9:50
Shia LaBeouf, Michelle Monaghan
Drama • Rated PG 13

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Strange BUT TRUE

By Samantha Weaver

■ If you're like most people, the length of your footprint is approximately 15 percent of your height.

■ Those who study such matters claim that Queen Elizabeth I was rather fond of playing practical jokes on her courtiers.

■ It was American journalist and Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist Ellen Goodman who made the following sage observation: "Normal is getting dressed in clothes that you buy for work and driving through traffic in a car that you are still paying for—in order to get to the job you need to pay for the clothes and the car, and the house you leave vacant all day so you can afford to live in it."

■ Hens don't actually sit on their eggs; they squat on them, keeping their weight on their feet.

■ In Texas, there's a house that's made entirely of Formica. It was designated a National Landmark in 1998.

■ It's not just for cats anymore: Purina also makes dog litter.

■ You're probably aware of the much-publicized fact that the Great Wall of China is one of the only human constructions that is visible from outer space. You might not know, however, that the extensive network of dikes that keeps the ocean out of the Netherlands is another such construction.

■ In the United States, about $8 billion is spent every year on dry cleaning.

■ The electronics store Best Buy was originally called "Sound of Music."

■ There are more than 1,000 different species of bats in the world.

■ In 1841, eyewitnesses in Derby, England, reported seeing frogs and fish fall from the sky. Some of the animals were even alive.

■ Native Americans once used the herb Echinacea to treat snake bites.

■ ■ ■

Thought for the Day: "What this country needs is more free speech worth listening to."—Hansell B. Duckett

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MAGIC MAZE ● WORLD LEADERS IN THE 1950s

G N K I F C A X V S Q O L J N
H E C A X V T R O C N A R F A
P N L M K H R U S H C H E V M
E L L U A G E D J U H F W D U
B Y X V T C R P O R M K O R R
I G E O D B M Z X C W R H U T
T O T I H O R I H H R E N Q O
N I A L N S T A L I N S E J I
T G F M E I S S A L E S S D C
A Y X W D V T S R L A A I P O
N L K J E N O I R U G N E B I

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

Ben-Gurion	Eisenhower	Macmillan	Selassie
Churchill	Franco	Mao	Stalin
de Gaulle	Hirohito	Nasser	Tito
Eden	Khrushchev	Nehru	

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GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

	–		x		20
÷		+		x	
	x		–		17
+		x		–	
	x		+		23
11		18		23	

DIFFICULTY: ★★★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!

2 3 4 4 5 6 7 8 9

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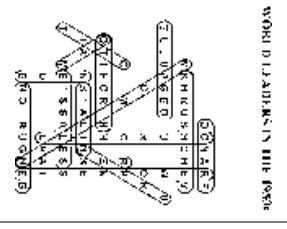
MAGIC MAZE ANSWER



GO FIGURE ANSWER

8	–	3	x	4	20
÷		+		x	
4	x	6	–	7	17
+		x		–	
9	x	2	+	5	23
	11		18		

How to correct a pet owner

Q: My son and his girlfriend have two Pomeranians. One is an 8-year-old female, "Sassy," which the girlfriend had before they got together. The other is a male, "Junior," now about 21 months old. Junior is considered my son's dog, and he disciplines him by flipping him over on his back and scolding him. Now the dog growls and bares his teeth at my son if he comes near him. The dog was very loving at first. What do you think about this, and how can it be fixed?—Rod S., via e-mail

A: It's clear that you don't approve of the way your son disciplines his dog, and I agree with you—that's a terrible way to correct a dog. There are ways to show dominance without threatening your pet.

Part of the issue is that Junior is a Pomeranian, a breed that can be quite temperamental. Pomeranians also can become very neurotic in the wrong kind of environment. Certainly, not all Pomeranians are ill-tempered and neurotic, but they are small dogs—energetic and excitable—that often don't tolerate lots of people or loud noises.

I don't have a lot of advice for you, unfortunately. Junior has some issues, but there are no clear signs of neglect or abuse. And your son probably will not listen to advice you have to give—he might even be insulted that you think he's treating Junior wrong.

The best that you can do is lead by example. When visiting, be very calm and soothing around Junior. If the dog's behavior interferes with your visit, kindly ask your son to place Junior in another room until the visit is over. If you have a dog, treat him or her as you normally would whenever your son visits, but don't preach. I guarantee he is watching how you treat your dog.

■ ■ ■

Send your tips, questions and comments to Paws Corner, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475, or e-mail them to pawscorner@hotmail.com.

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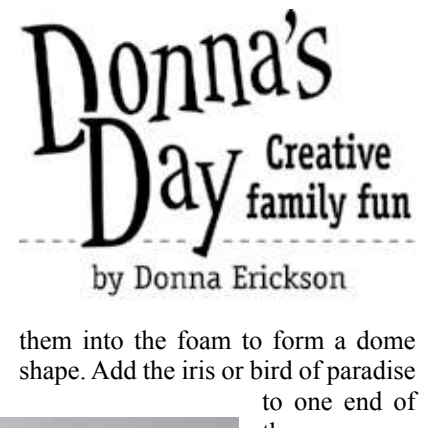
Use flowers to create a turkey centerpiece



Thanksgiving Day is turkey day! A turkey with all the trimmings gets center stage at our annual gathering of aunts, uncles, cousins and friends, but this year we're going to put a little twist into the production. While the bird is in the oven, it's fun to add to the celebration of the day by getting the kids and guests involved in creating a turkey centerpiece that begins with a beautiful bouquet of flowers in fall colors. They can make this entire eye-catching floral display from start to finish.

For the turkey's body, you will need about two dozen flowers in various fall colors, such as red, gold, yellow and orange. Good choices are marigold, chrysanthemums or fall daisies. For the neck and head of the turkey, choose a yellow or orange iris or a bird of paradise. (Check with your florist in advance and request a bird of paradise for best results.)

To create the tail "feathers," ferns or long, large leaves from many house or garden plants are ideal.

Here's the creative fun:

Soak a 4-by-4-inch floral foam oasis in a pan of water. When the foam is saturated, set it in a plastic container that is about the same size. Create the body of the turkey by trimming the stems of the flowers and poking them into the foam to form a dome shape. Add the iris or bird of paradise to one end of the arrangement for the head and neck of the turkey. Tuck in leaves at the opposite end for a tail.

Make the turkey's wattle by knotting together two red or burgundy balloons (do not inflate them), and securing them to the stem of the iris or bird of paradise with floral wire or a straight pin. Your unique turkey is ready to place on the table for your Thanksgiving meal.

■ ■ ■

Donna Erickson's award-winning television series "Donna's Day" airs on public television nationwide. Visit www.donnasday.com to find out when it airs on your local PBS station and to sign up for Donna's e-newsletter.

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Life & Style

Madonna, Ritchie on London divorce docket Friday

LONDON (AP)—A judge will likely grant Madonna and Guy Ritchie an initial divorce decree on Friday, according to the schedule for London's High Court.

The court lists "Ciccone M L v Ritchie G S" as one of 17 cases for "matrimonial and civil partnership causes for pronouncement of decree." That means a judge is to grant the couple a preliminary divorce decree, or decree nisi.

After six weeks and a day, the couple will probably be granted a decree absolute and the divorce will become final.

It is unusual for the couple to attend court in such cases.

British media reported Thursday that the celebrity pair had reached a settlement which would see the pop superstar keep the majority of her estimated 300 million pound ($445 million) fortune and share custody of two of her children with her film-director husband.

A report in the Evening Standard newspaper said Ritchie had refused to take any of Madonna's assets, while the Times of London said Madonna would hold on to the bulk of her fortune. The papers said the couple had also reached a deal regarding their two children: Rocco, 8, and David Banda, 3, who was adopted from Malawi in 2006.

The two boys would split their time between Britain and the United States, the papers said, while Lourdes—Madonna's 12-year-old daughter from a previous relationship with personal trainer Carlos Leon—will live with her mother in the United States.

Neither paper cited a named source for their reports and requests for comment from representatives for the couple were not immediately returned.

An agreement between the two would avoid an ugly, public and expensive courtroom battle like the one between former Beatle Paul McCartney and model Heather Mills. Mills has said the media coverage of the rancorous divorce had pushed her to the brink of suicide; McCartney compared the process to going through hell.

Madonna and Ritchie, director of "Snatch" and "Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels," married in December 2000 at Skibo Castle in the Scottish Highlands.

In recent years, however, the relationship was dogged by rumors that the pair had fallen out over Madonna's plans to adopt a second child from Malawi. Media reports over the summer—denied by Madonna—linked the singer to the breakup of New York Yankee Alex Rodriguez's marriage to his ex-wife Cynthia.

Madonna and Ritchie announced last month they were divorcing after almost eight years of marriage. They own homes in London, Los Angeles and New York, and a 1,200-acre retreat in Wiltshire, England.

AP

US actor Ben Affleck walks through a camp for displaced people, Wednesday Nov. 19, 2008, near Kibati just north of Goma in eastern Congo.

Ben Affleck tours refugee camps in eastern Congo

GOMA, Congo (AP)—Ben Affleck is talking to children and aid officials in refugee camps in war-torn eastern Congo in an effort to raise awareness of the conflict that has displaced at least 250,000 people.

The actor has visited the Central African country four times since 2007 and also has made a documentary about its problems.

"I'm not an expert in international affairs or diplomacy, but it doesn't take that to see the tremendous suffering here," he told The Associated Press on Thursday in Goma, the regional capital. "It's not something that we as human beings can, in good conscience, ignore."

Years of sporadic violence in eastern Congo intensified in August, when fighting heated up between the army and fighters loyal to rebel leader Laurent Nkunda.

Some fear the current crisis could once again draw in neighboring countries. Congo's devastating 1998-2002 war split the vast nation into rival fiefdoms and involved half a dozen African armies.

"I'm really glad that more people are paying more attention to (Congo) now but I'm really saddened that it's taken this uptick in violence to make that happen," Affleck said.

"The primary reason I am here is to urge people to give money to the NGOs and charities doing hard work in eastern Congo on meager funds," he said. "And if people out there have an existing relationship with a charity, to urge that charity to get involved in eastern Congo. To let people know, 'Don't just read the horror stories in the newspapers and turn off.'"

Affleck said he first became interested in Congo a few years ago, when Hollywood's attentions began to focus another African crisis, Darfur. After doing more research on Africa, he was shocked to learn about Congo's four-year war, during which an estimated 5 million people died.

AP

US actor Ben Affleck walks through a camp for displaced people, Wednesday Nov. 19, 2008, near Kibati just north of Goma in eastern Congo.

Surprise! Violinist Shaham gets Avery Fisher Prize

NEW YORK (AP)—The last time they shared a Lincoln Center stage, violinist Gil Shaham wielded the big smiles as Gustavo Dudamel made his conducting debut with the New York Philharmonic.

Thursday night, it was Dudamel's turn.

At the end of Shaham's nationally televised performance on PBS's "Live From Lincoln Center," Dudamel suddenly appeared in the audience and greeted Shaham as the violinist walked toward an exit.

"Stop!" Dudamel called out. "My friend. Nice to see you. I have the honor to tell you that you have won the Avery Fisher Prize for 2008."

The 37-year-old Shaham took two steps back to catch his breath.

The prize, named for the man who invented the transistorized amplifier and helped fund the landmark West Side arts complex, is worth $75,000. It was established in 1974 and has been awarded to 19 other musicians, including Yo-Yo Ma, Midori, Emanuel Ax and most recently Joshua Bell.

"The prize is for people who have really reached the pinnacle of their career," Nathan Leventhal, chairman of the Avery Fisher Artist Program, told the 150-member audience after the TV cameras went off the air.

"Oh my God," Shaham said.

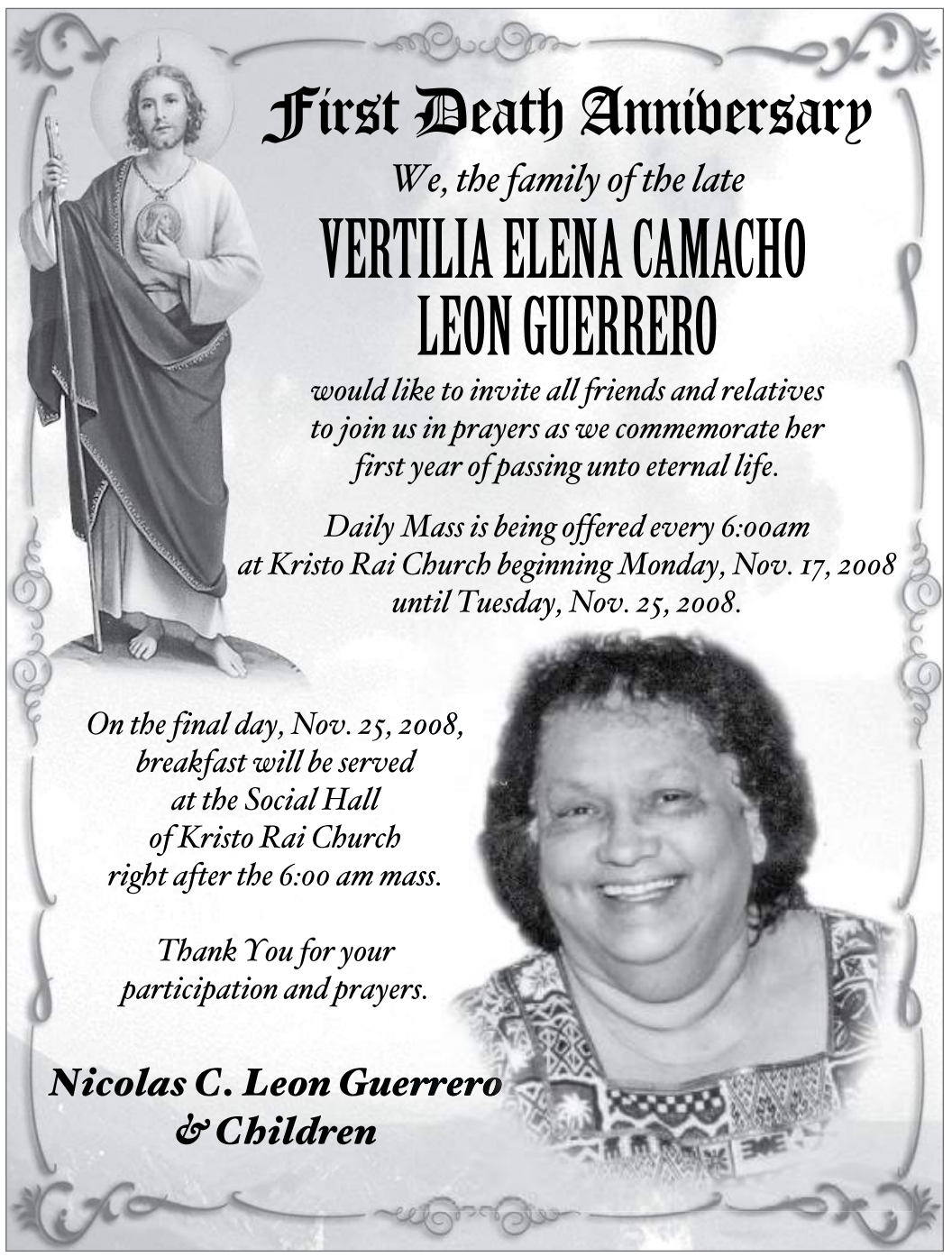
The violinist had just finished performing works by the Spanish composer Pablo de Sarasate, who died 100 years ago this fall, when the 27-year-old Dudamel made the surprise announcement at Lincoln Center's Kaplan Penthouse.

During the Venezuelan conductor's debut last November with the New York Philharmonic, Shaham maintained a huge grin while playing the Dvorak Violin Concerto as his friend led the musicians through a triumphant performance.

Shaham was born in Champaign-Urbana, Ill., to Israeli parents. When he was 7, he and his family moved to Israel, where he studied violin. Three years later, he began studying at The Juilliard School and at the Aspen Music School in Colorado.

His career got a big boost in 1989, when as a late substitute soloist for an indisposed Itzhak Perlman, the then-high school junior turned in highly praised performances with the London Symphony Orchestra and conductor Michael Tilson Thomas.

The following year, Shaham won an Avery Fisher Career Grant, an award to help young musicians start their careers.


First Death Anniversary
We, the family of the late
VERTILIA ELENA CAMACHO
LEON GUERRERO
would like to invite all friends and relatives
to join us in prayers as we commemorate her
first year of passing unto eternal life.
Daily Mass is being offered every 6:00am
at Kristo Rai Church beginning Monday, Nov. 17, 2008
until Tuesday, Nov. 25, 2008.
On the final day, Nov. 25, 2008,
breakfast will be served
at the Social Hall
of Kristo Rai Church
right after the 6:00 am mass.
Thank You for your
participation and prayers.
Nicolas C. Leon Guerrero
& Children

ENTERTAINMENT BRIEF

Dr Pepper to deliver on its free-soda promise

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Dr Pepper is making good on its promise of free soda now that the release of Guns N' Roses' "Chinese Democracy" is a reality. The soft-drink maker said in March that it would give a free soda to everyone in America if the album dropped in 2008. "Chinese Democracy," infamously delayed since recording began in 1994, goes on sale Sunday. "We never thought this day would come," Tony Jacobs, Dr Pepper's vice president of marketing, said in a statement. "But now that it's here, all we can say is: The Dr Pepper's on us." Beginning Sunday at 12:01 a.m., coupons for a free 20-ounce soda will be available for 24 hours on Dr Pepper's Web site. They'll be honored until Feb. 28. Dr Pepper is owned by Dr Pepper Snapple Group, Inc.

Walters on flak from 'some people': 'I resent it'

NEW YORK (AP)—Friction keeps obstructing "The View." While she never mentioned Rosie O'Donnell by name, it was clear who Barbara Walters was referring to when she opened Thursday's show by complaining about "some people who have done this show" who criticize the daytime gabfest after leaving. Walters said some former hosts feel the need "to dump on it, maybe for their own publicity." She added: "that not only hurts me, but I resent it." Her comments came one day after O'Donnell told reporters while promoting her upcoming variety special that Walters wanted the hosts to make believe they were getting along. O'Donnell says she's experienced something like "post-traumatic stress disorder" since leaving.

Sean Stewart settles case over fight

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A case against Rod Stewart's son over a brawl at a Hollywood nightclub has been resolved. Seal Bral, an attorney for the man who sued Sean Stewart in 2007, says the parties reached a settlement after undergoing private mediation. A Los Angeles court dismissed the case on Tuesday. Daniel Refoua sued Stewart over a fight at a nightclub in 2006 he says left him with a broken nose and other injuries. The case had been scheduled to go to trial in January, although Stewart's attorneys had been seeking a dismissal. An attorney for Stewart did not return a phone message Thursday. Stewart appeared in the A&E show "Sons of Hollywood" and is also one of the patients featured on this season's "Celebrity Rehab with Dr. Drew" on VH1.

'DWTS' pro Julianne Hough won't return next season

NEW YORK (AP)—Julianne Hough says she's not returning to "Dancing With the Stars" next season. In an interview on Ryan Seacrest's radio show, the 20-year-old professional dancer said she needed time to concentrate on her country music career. Hough, who's nabbed two titles in four seasons on ABC's popular dance competition, said Thursday: "I really, really want to focus on the music and, you know, kind of be taken seriously a little bit." The Utah native and her celebrity partner, Cody Linley, were eliminated from the show Tuesday night. This year, she released a self-titled country album and a holiday album. Asked if she plans to try out for Fox's "American Idol," Hough joked that she didn't think ABC "would be too excited about that."

Jennifer Garner wins order against alleged stalker

In this Sept. 5, 2008, file photo, Jennifer Garner arrives for the Stand Up to Cancer benefit at the Kodak Theater in Los Angeles.

AP

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Jennifer Garner has won a restraining order from a man she says has been stalking her for years. An attorney for Garner appeared in a Los Angeles courtroom Thursday morning and won three years of protection for Garner, husband Ben Affleck and their daughter, Violet.

As first reported by TMZ, Garner petitioned for protection earlier this month from 36-year-old Steven R. Burky, who she says has been harassing her since 2002.

Garner wrote in a sworn statement that she believed Burky's "obsessive, threatening and stalking behavior" posed a threat to her and her family.

The former star of the television series "Alias," Garner has also appeared in recent films such as "Juno" and "The Kingdom."

Britney Spears craves freedom amid career upswing

NEW YORK (AP)—Britney Spears is craving more freedom—and less of the "control" that's stabilized her personal life and reinvigorated her career over the last several months.

In an upcoming behind-the-scenes documentary, the 26-year-old pop star says: "If I wasn't under the restraints that I'm under right now, with all the lawyers and doctors and people analyzing me every day and all that kind of stuff ... I'd feel so liberated, and feel like myself."

The 90-minute film, "Britney: For the Record," airs Nov. 30 on MTV and the LOGO network. She is shown backstage at the MTV Video Music Awards; recording her new album, "Circus"; dodging the paparazzi; and goofing off with her father, Jamie, who controls her personal and financial affairs.

While her career takes a positive turn, Spears says she's sad and feels her life is "too in control."

"There's no excitement, there's no passion, there's no nothing. It's just like 'Groundhog Day' every day, you know? So I'm really bored," she says, getting teary.

The mother of two young sons with ex-husband Kevin Federline says she "used to be a cool chick," but the paparazzi has made it impossible for her to be out and about. In the documentary, which was executive produced by Spears' manager Larry Rudolph, her security staff discusses hiring a decoy to fool the cameras.

Spears' turnaround kicked into high gear in September when she nabbed three VMAS, including video of the year. Now on the comeback trail, she has a hit song, "Womanizer," and is releasing "Circus" next month.

She talks about her two-year downward spiral, which included a divorce, a custody battle, public meltdowns and a sluggish performance at last year's VMAs, when she barely made it through a dance number of "Gimme More."

"I've been through a lot this year—well, actually the past two or three years," she says. "And my trust has really been battered. I've definitely grown up—big time. And I'm very weary of a lot of things. Very protective of myself."

She says sometimes she gets lonely.

"You're guarded," she says. "You have to be that way, otherwise you get taken advantage of and get in situations like I did the past year. I totally lost my way. I lost focus, I lost myself, I had that type of nature within me that wanted to rebel out.

"I never wanted to become one of those prisoner people—I always wanted to feel free and get in my car and go and not let people make me feel like I have to stay in my home. I think that was always the part of me that kinda got me in trouble," she says.

Spears dishes on Federline and ex-boyfriend Justin Timberlake in the film.

"With Justin, he was a part of the magnitude of what I'd become," says Spears, who ended a three-year relationship with Timberlake in 2002. "So then when he was gone, I was like, 'What am I supposed to do with myself?' ... I would go out just to keep my mind busy, just to keep going."

While she was devastated over her breakup with Timberlake, she says she handled that better than her separation from Federline in November 2006.

"With Kevin, because I had two children with him, I did not know what to do with myself," she says. "I had built my dream home in Malibu, a huge house and a pool and a huge yard for the kids and I did everything for them. And just my world was that."

She says she married Federline for the wrong reasons instead of following her heart. As a result, she went down a "weird path."

She says her marriage disintegrated when Federline began concentrating on his rap career.

When it ended, "I felt so alone. I didn't really want to think about the reality of it. It was like, 'I'm OK.' ... But I never really faced it, and I just ran," she says.

Wife reluctant to let go of dead husband's family

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DearAbby

DEAR ABBY: When my wife, "Kiki," and I married three years ago, I had been divorced for 11 years, and she had been widowed for eight.

The problem we're having is she continues to want to spend the holidays with her deceased husband's family. They are nice people, but I don't feel comfortable with it. Kiki and I have talked about starting our own traditions, but she insists that she doesn't want to cut those ties. Sometimes I feel like I am living with a ghost.

I have spoken to other members of her family. They have agreed that she needs to cut those ties, but my wife is stubborn about changing her holiday routine. Your thoughts on this, please?

LIVING WITH A GHOST IN KANSAS

DEAR LIVING WITH A GHOST: You didn't mention how long your wife was married before she was widowed, but it seems that it was long enough that she became part of her in-laws' family. Please don't take that away from her. If you give them a chance, I am sure they will accept you as part of the family, too.

Of course, the solution to your problem lies in compromise. Not every holiday should be spent with the former in-laws—but that doesn't mean you couldn't alternate. And that's what I recommend you do until you establish different traditions.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I have a friend I'll call "J.D.," who is being abused by his father. It started after his mother died, when J.D. was 6.

I have known about the abuse for some time, but it recently went to extremes. J.D. called another friend, crying, asking for the number of a suicide hotline. I called J.D. the next day asking if he was all right, and he said that despite almost stabbing himself, he was fine.

I am really concerned, but I can't tell anyone. If I do, it might get back to his father who will take it out on him. J.D. insists that he doesn't need help, even though he hates his father and is hit regularly. It kills me to see my friend this way. Please give me some advice on what to do because I am truly confused and concerned.

TRUE FRIEND IN MASSACHUSETTS

DEAR TRUE FRIEND: Some secrets are meant to be kept, and others are not. When you know that someone is in so much pain he or she is talking about committing suicide, it is time to see that person gets help. You can do that for J.D. by telling your parents, a teacher or counselor at school or your cleryperson. Educators and the clergy are mandated by law to report physical abuse when they know it is going on.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I am a 21-year-old working part time at a grocery store as a checker and a bagger. I make $7 per hour. Part of my job involves helping customers carry groceries out to their vehicles. I have never expected any compensation for this service, and I have always politely refused any tips that are offered.

Unfortunately, some of these tipping customers can be very insistent about giving me money. One woman even asked me if I felt that I was "too good" to accept a gift from her!

I really don't feel that I should be tipped like a waiter, but I also don't want to get into a verbal scuffle. What would be the best way to turn down a tip in cases like these?

TONY IN TOPEKA

DEAR TONY: When someone offers to tip you, it's usually because they feel you have "gone the extra mile" to be of assistance. There are two ways to handle a customer who persists in offering one after you have refused it. The first is to accept the money graciously, in the spirit it was offered. The second is to tell the person that it is "against company policy."

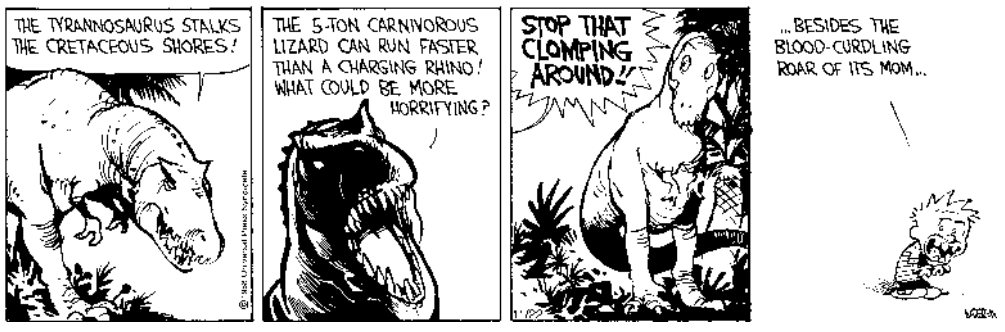
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


THE TYRANNOSAURUS STALKS THE CRETACEOUS SHORES!
THE 5-TON CARNIVOROUS LIZARD CAN RUN FASTER THAN A CHARGING RHINO! WHAT COULD BE MORE HORRIFYING?
STOP THAT CLOMPING AROUND!!
...BESIDES THE BLOOD-CURDLING ROAR OF ITS MOM..

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

IT'S THE FIRST SNOWFLAKE OF WINTER!
...AND THE SECOND! AND THE THIRD!
JIM DAVIS 11-22
TOM GARFIELD © 2008 UFS DAILY
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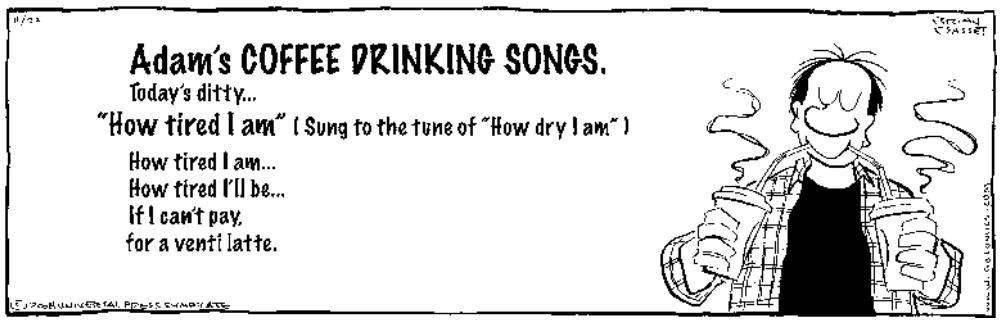
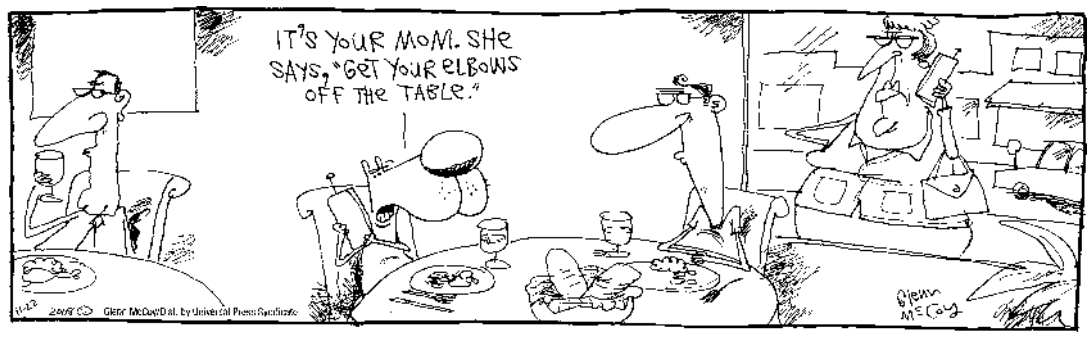
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


Adam's COFFEE DRINKING SONGS.
Today's ditty...
"How tired I am" (Sung to the tune of "How dry I am")
How tired I am...
How tired I'll be...
If I can't pay,
for a venti latte.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

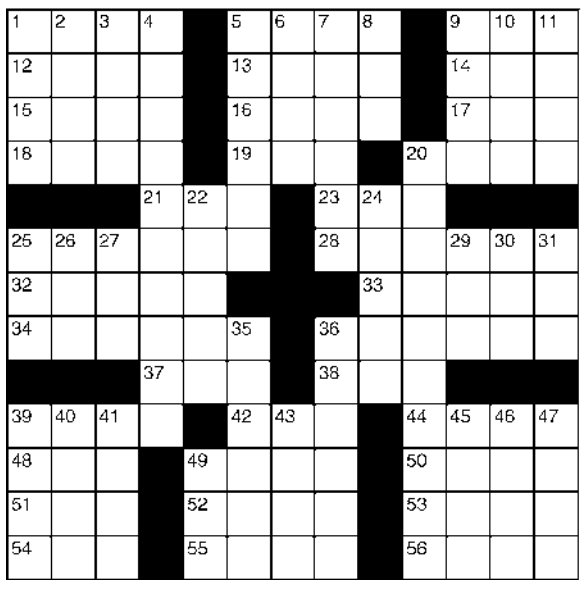
ACROSS
1 Overly theatrical
5 Rue the run
9 Cover
12 Pelvic bones
13 Tactic
14 Commotion
15 Turnpike fee
16 Whine
17 Mal de —
18 Bigfoot's cousin
19 Got the ball rolling
20 Hormel product
21 Away from SSW
23 "Born in the —"
25 Legendary French actress
28 Procession
32 Out in the open
33 Semiprecious azure stone
34 Preceding
36 Command
37 Tex- —
38 Mischievous tyke
39 Jab
42 Garfield, for one
44 Speedy steed
48 Samovar
49 Warp crosser
50 "Saturday Night —"
51 Floral garland
52 Roll call reply
53 PC picture
54 Sodom evacuee
55 Bloodhound's find
56 Salamander

DOWN
1 Metropolis
2 Lotion additive
3 Cartoonist Caniff
4 8-Down is one
5 Simple computer program
6 Mr. Green's game
7 Robbery
8 CBS symbol
9 Genie's home
10 "What's the big —?"
11 On-campus housing
20 Joe Biden's opponent
22 Dame lead-in
24 "The Crucible" setting
25 Go after an apple?
26 Hail or farewell
27 Gridiron decider
29 Mimic
30 Insult (Sl.)
31 "Guinness Book" suffix
35 Top
36 Rancorous
39 Influence
40 Sandwich treat
41 Wield needles
43 Roundish do
45 Wedding shower?
46 Acknowledge
47 Crooked
49 Personal question

Solution time: 27 mins.

B	A	R	■	T	H	I	S	■	R	I	M	S
I	V	E	■	A	L	T	O	■	I	D	E	A
C	A	S	H	C	R	O	P	■	Y	O	R	K
■	■	T	A	I	■	■	V	A	I	V	E	■
S	I	A	N	T	■	S	I	D	■	■	■	■
H	A	T	S	■	S	M	A	S	H	H	I	T
A	V	E	■	S	P	A	C	E	■	O	B	I
H	A	S	H	M	A	R	K	■	S	N	I	P
■	■	■	A	J	N	T	■	G	U	E	S	S
W	R	O	N	G	■	■	R	A	C	Y	■	■
H	A	R	K	■	T	R	A	S	H	B	I	N
O	N	C	E	■	W	O	K	S	■	E	V	E
S	T	A	R	■	O	B	E	Y	■	E	Y	E

Yesterday's answer 11-22



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Boris Becker, 41; Mariel Hemingway, 47; Jamie Lee Curtis, 50; Billie Jean King, 65

Happy Birthday: New beginnings will help you get over the past. You have lots of talent so stop denying yourself a brighter future. Good change only comes about when you make it happen. Lessons have been learned and it's time to apply what you know toward building a better and brighter future. Your numbers are 4, 11, 20, 25, 31, 33, 46

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Do your best and don't feel bad or guilty if someone is critical. What or whom you want to work or spend time with may not be the right fit for you. A good idea regarding making money will help you build confidence and optimism. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Do whatever it takes to finish what you start. Be true to yourself and honest with everyone around you and you will have no regrets or explaining to do. Question what doesn't make sense to you. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Stick to a budget and save this festive season. Buying gifts that put you in the poor house will only add to your problems. Be true to yourself and save for the future—whoever doesn't like it shouldn't be in your life. ✪✪✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Have enough confidence in yourself that you don't feel pressured by questions or criticism. If you start to procrastinate, you will play into the hands of someone who wants you to fail. Don't give in to emotional blackmail. ✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): A playful challenge will get you enthusiastic about something you want to pursue in the new year. Socializing and entertaining events will all lead to creative outlets that can enhance your perspective regarding your current position. ✪✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Make surprise plans for friends or family. A problem with someone who opposes your actions will have to be dealt with sternly. Love is on the rise and planning a special evening should be your way of letting the one you care most about know how you feel. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Listen but don't divulge your feelings. You will come out on top if you can be objective. A love issue may cause you to reconsider what you want to do about your home and personal life. Someone you least expect will give you insight. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Spending to make yourself feel better will result in additional worry. Do something with someone you love that won't cost a dime. Size down, reflect on what you have spent in the past and revamp your way of dealing with money matters. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): The less information you give out, the further you will get. Problems with people who are too conservative or afraid to take a chance can be expected. Stick close to home and work quietly on your own. ✪✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Keep things small and refrain from sharing your findings. A personal affront can be expected from someone who fears your success will change your current relationship. Act fast and don't give anyone a chance to stand in your way. ✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Play on the emotions of the person who can influence your future the most. Have a game plan for the future that will grab the attention of the very people who are willing to help you achieve your goals. ✪✪✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): You may want to travel but choose your destination carefully. Find a spot where you can digest the information you need to make a good decision regarding your future. Don't act on impulse. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are changeable, practical and dedicated to your beliefs. You are intelligent, you stand up for your rights and you cannot be pushed.

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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Eugenia's Web sites: ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun,* ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

3		1		2			4
9		5			7		8
	7		4		1		5
	6		7		9		4
6		3			8		2
4			6		7		1

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 11/22

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

1	9	2	4	8	5	7	3	6
6	7	8	2	3	9	1	5	4
4	5	3	1	6	7	9	2	8
7	3	5	9	2	4	6	8	1
2	4	1	8	7	6	3	9	5
9	8	6	5	1	3	2	4	7
3	6	9	7	4	8	5	1	2
5	2	4	6	9	1	8	7	3
8	1	7	3	5	2	4	6	9

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 11/22

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

YOUNG ANIMALS **Solution: 4 letters**

E	V	A	C	H	I	L	D	N	U	R	T	U	R	E
L	P	R	O	T	E	C	T	E	N	G	Y	C	G	E
I	G	L	G	N	I	R	P	S	F	F	O	A	L	T
G	E	N	N	S	E	G	A	T	S	C	L	T	D	A
A	L	U	I	Y	B	A	B	M	O	F	N	E	R	B
R	T	I	C	S	K	I	A	O	U	E	F	R	A	U
F	E	A	T	L	R	L	N	O	G	E	K	P	U	C
Y	L	P	I	T	L	U	M	H	N	I	H	I	G	N
F	O	M	H	S	E	A	N	D	T	S	T	L	P	I
P	P	O	H	E	C	R	D	T	P	W	O	L	U	N
H	D	O	M	K	H	L	E	A	R	N	O	A	P	F
C	A	A	E	C	Ⓒ	N	W	Y	P	N	M	R	R	A
T	T	E	U	Ⓤ	A	N	N	P	E	T	S	Y	G	N
A	T	O	Ⓑ	Y	E	I	G	N	I	L	S	O	G	T
H	P	Ⓢ	O	F	T	L	O	C	R	A	D	L	E	D

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Adapt, Baby, Birth, Calf, Camouflage, Caterpillar, Cave, Child, Cocoon, Colt, Cradled, Cubs, Cygnet, Defend, Fragile, Fry, Gentle, Gosling, Growth, Guard, Hatch, Hole, Incubate, Infant, Keet, Kitten, Learn, Litter, Milk, Multiply, Nursing, Nurture, Offspring, Pets, Pouch, Protect, Pup, Shoat, Small, Smooth, Soft, Spawn, Stages, Tadpole, Tame, Teach, Tiny, Tunnel

Yesterday's Answer: Thongs

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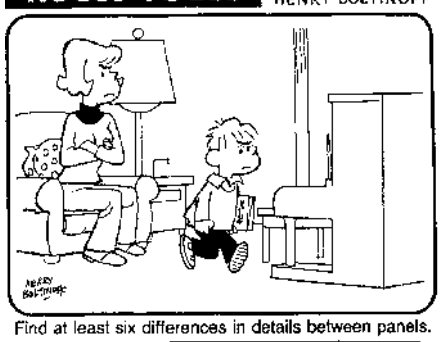
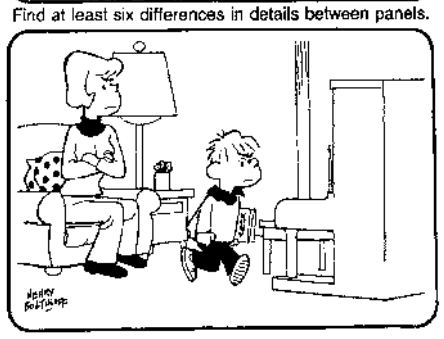
HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



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Differences: 1. Pillow pattern is different. 2. Boy's shirt is black. 3. Mom's shoes are black. 4. Flowers are added to vase. 5. Piano is taller. 6. Mom's hairstyle is different.

Wishing Well®

6	3	8	3	8	7	5	7	3	2	6	8	4
G	N	S	E	T	D	S	O	W	J	I	A	I
3	6	8	5	7	6	7	2	5	6	3	5	2
E	F	Y	E	F	T	O	O	C	F	N	R	B
5	4	6	4	3	5	7	3	6	5	2	4	6
E	D	R	E	E	T	R	R	O	A	I	A	M
4	6	5	4	8	2	8	7	5	4	3	8	7
L	A	D	S	F	M	O	O	M	R	G	C	T
2	3	4	8	2	4	6	2	4	3	2	7	4
P	Y	E	U	R	A	F	O	L	E	V	H	I
3	8	4	7	2	6	5	7	4	8	6	7	3
X	S	Z	E	E	R	I	R	E	E	I	S	E
8	4	3	6	3	6	5	3	6	2	5	3	5
D	D	R	E	T	N	R	E	D	S	E	D	R

HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

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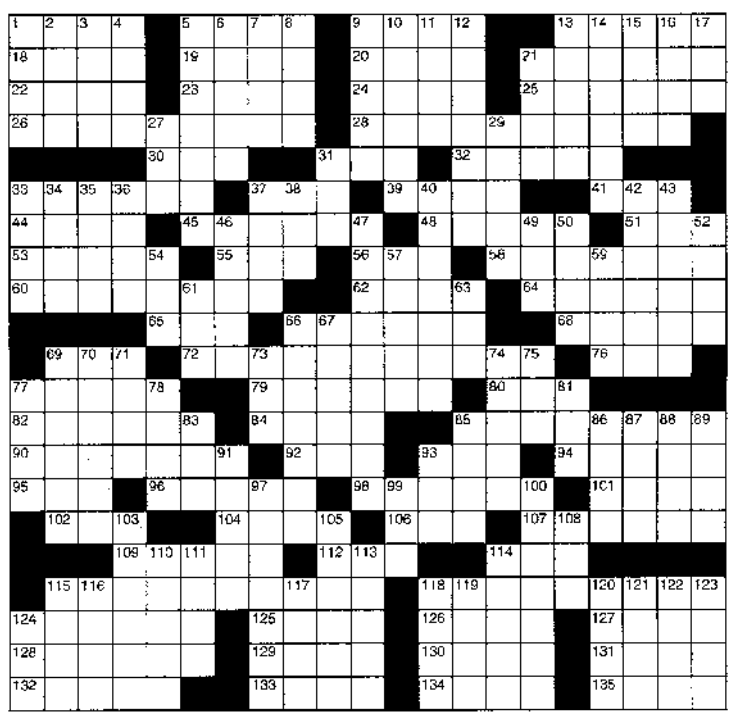
Super Crossword

FAUXCATIONS

ACROSS
1 Slightly open
5 Celt
9 Lose one's fur
13 Orchestra section
18 Ahmedabad attire
19 Voice type
20 Munich mister
21 Proof-of-purchase, often
22 Skip
23 Skeleton part
24 Proficient
26 Second Triumvirate member
26 Soda jerk?
28 Laundry CEO?
30 Revolutionary Guevara
31 Opie's aunt
32 Drawing room
33 "NYPD Blue" creator
37 — sauce
39 Dandelion or darnel
41 Neutral color
44 Soap additive
45 Charlotte, for one
48 Sacred song
51 Swell place?
53 Psychedelic Timothy
55 Wharton's "The — of Innocence"
56 Gram lead-in
58 Golf instructor?
60 Deli worker?
62 Shoot down
64 Tristan's tootsie
65 Qty.
66 Gimpel and Jong
68 Writer Rogers St. Johns
69 Existed
72 Gas station attendant?
76 Hook's mate
77 Criticizes
79 Mischievous
80 Mauna --
82 Dental appointment, e.g.
84 Manuscript imperative
85 Yacht peddler?
90 Roller coaster operator?
92 — Dawr Chong
93 Baby beaver
94 Record player
95 Actor Chaney
96 Attract the IRS?
98 Minnie of "Circle of Friends"
101 Sturdy trees
102 Inc., in England
104 Spare fare
105 Mrs. McKinley
107 Unrefined
109 "Midnight at the —" ('74 hit)
112 Joplin composition
114 Good buddy
115 Herpetologist?
118 Phrenologist?
124 Fiesta target
125 Bring to ruin
126 Austin or Garr
127 Fancy fabric
128 Starting point
129 Sentence pt.
130 Ornery Olympian
131 Spoken
132 Prevent
133 It may be spare
134 Writer Harte
135 Guarded

DOWN
1 Beginning on
2 Actress Gertz
3 Neighbor of Cal.
4 "Puttin' on the —" ('83 hit)
5 South American cowboys
6 TV's "Kate & —"
7 Italian rumbler
8 Bank offering
9 Contour
10 Semitic tongue
11 Perry's creator
12 Does one's duds
13 Sonata movement
14 Range
15 College collar
16 "Stop!"
17 Sneak a peek
21 It's often jumped
27 Travel agcy.?
29 Egyptian statesman
31 "Later!"
33 Cinderella's soiree
34 Spread in a tub
35 Nag subtly
36 Towel word
37 Regret audibly
38 Wordsworth work
40 Certain inscription
42 One of the Judds
43 It's in the groove
46 Page or LaBelle
47 Waugh's "Brideshead —"
49 Fragrant neckwear
50 Butte
52 Surface measurement
54 Singer Sumac
57 Texas river
59 Cryptanalyst's concern
61 UN agency
63 City in Kyrgyzstan
66 New Haven hardwood
67 — -dope (Ali tactic)
69 Pop Art pioneer
70 Impassioned
71 "Graf —"
73 Fleur-de- —
74 Raise spirits?
75 Parisian potentate
77 Monastery garb
78 Computer command
81 Matterhorn, e.g.
83 Potok's "My Name Is Asher —"
85 Hindu deity
86 Restaurateur Toots
87 Ditch under a drawbridge
88 Egyptian symbol
89 Investigative
91 Chatter box?
93 Baby butter
97 Cause confusion
99 Fix a fight
100 Courbet, e.g.
103 Pharmacist's concern
105 Wall Street figure
108 Half and half?
110 Moving
111 Mikita of hockey
113 Battery part
114 Kind of soup
115 TV's "Spenser: For —"
116 "What's — for me?"
117 Cross inscription
118 Use a dagger
119 Gourmet Graham
120 Deere thing
121 Skater Lipinski
122 Epps or Sharif
123 Bank (on)
124 Seal school



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Trivia test

by Fifi Rodriguez

1. LANGUAGE: In its archaic usage, what is snickersnee?
2. LITERATURE: Which character utters the line, "Open sesame," and in which body of work?
3. HISTORY: Which Russian leader introduced the policy of "glasnost," which opened discussion of political and social issues and led to greater freedom of information?
4. FOOD & DRINK: What kind of drink is Bardolino?
5. SCIENCE: What is the focus of agronomy?
6. LEGALLY SPEAKING: What is voir dire?
7. U.S. PRESIDENTS: In the 1970s, President Gerald Ford introduced a slogan and acronym that didn't catch on well in America. What did his "WIN" buttons stand for?
8. MUSIC: Which pop singer starred in the 1980 remake of "The Jazz Singer"?
9. ANATOMY: How many wisdom teeth does an adult usually have?
10. MOVIES: Who played the devil-possessed child in "The Exorcist"?

Answers

1. Fighting with knives
2. "Ali Baba in the story "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves"
3. Mikhail Gorbachev
4. Red wine, named after an Italian town
5. Crop production and land management
6. Questioning of prospective jurors
7. Whip Inflation Now
8. Neil Diamond
9. Four
10. Linda Blair

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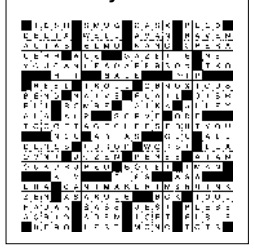
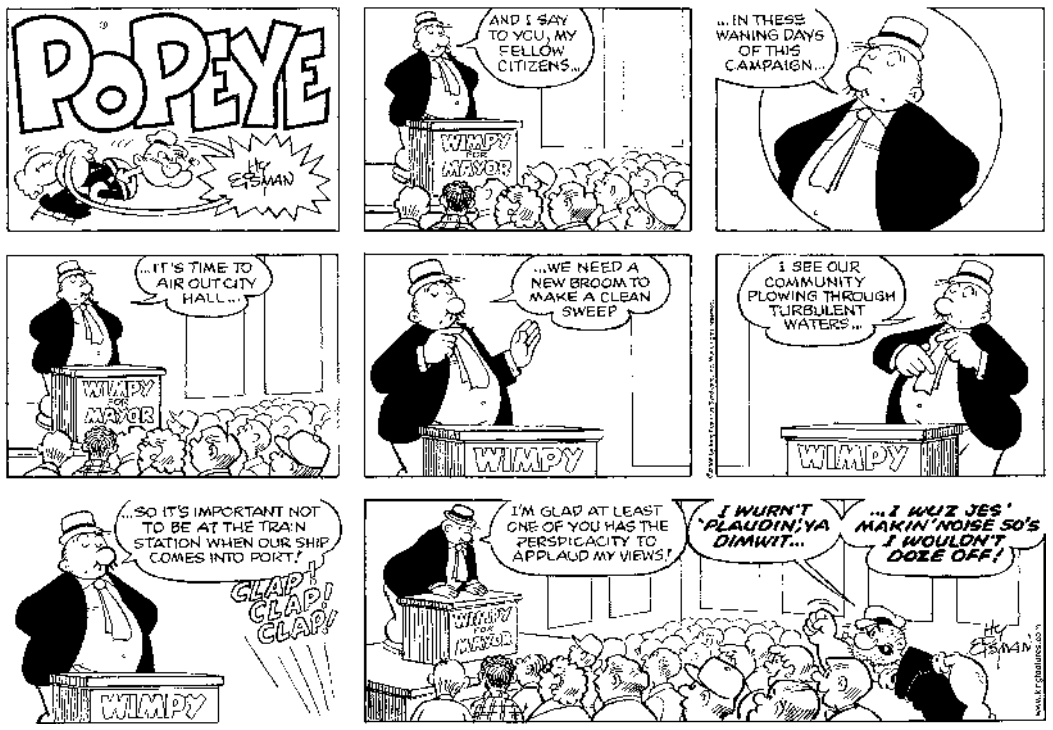
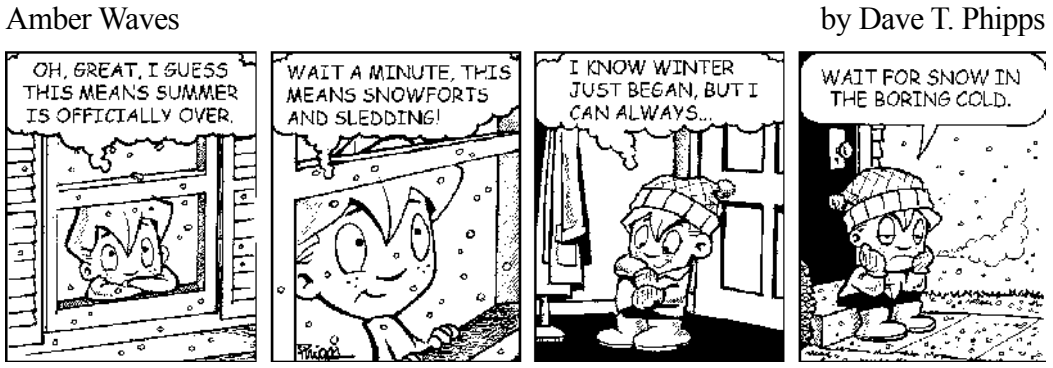
Saturday's Answers

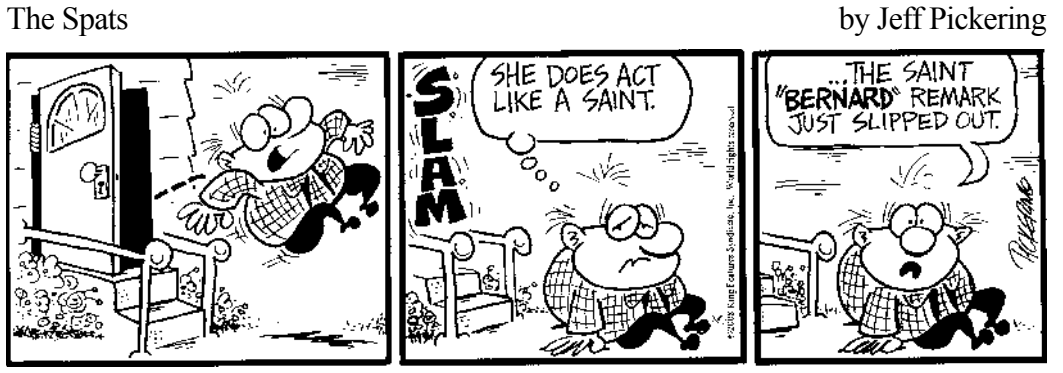


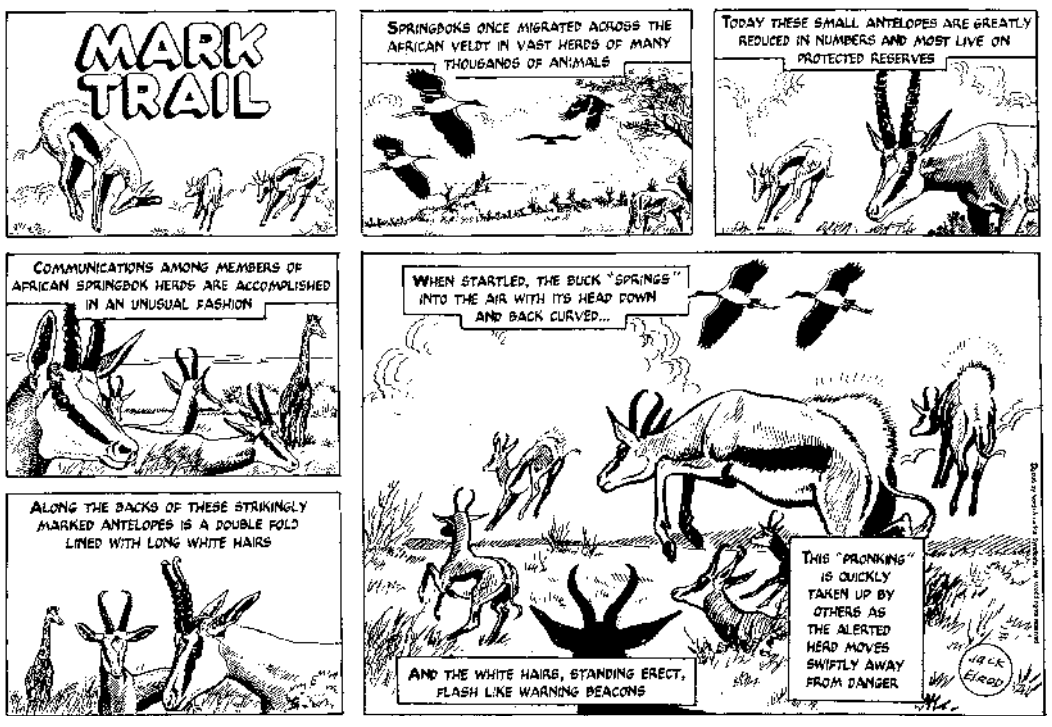

POPEYE
BY E.C. SEGAR
AND I SAY TO YOU, MY FELLOW CITIZENS...
WIMPY FOR MAYOR
...IN THESE WANING DAYS OF THIS CAMPAIGN...
...IT'S TIME TO AIR OUT CITY HALL...
...WE NEED A NEW BROOM TO MAKE A CLEAN SWEEP
I SEE OUR COMMUNITY PLOWING THROUGH TURBULENT WATERS...
WIMPY
...SO IT'S IMPORTANT NOT TO BE AT THE TRAIN STATION WHEN OUR SHIP COMES INTO PORT!
CLAP! CLAP! CLAP!
I'M GLAD AT LEAST ONE OF YOU HAS THE PERSPICACITY TO APPLAUD MY VIEWS!
I WURN'T 'PLAUDIN', YA DIMWIT...
...I WUZ JES' MAKIN' NOISE SO'S I WOULDN'T DOZE OFF!

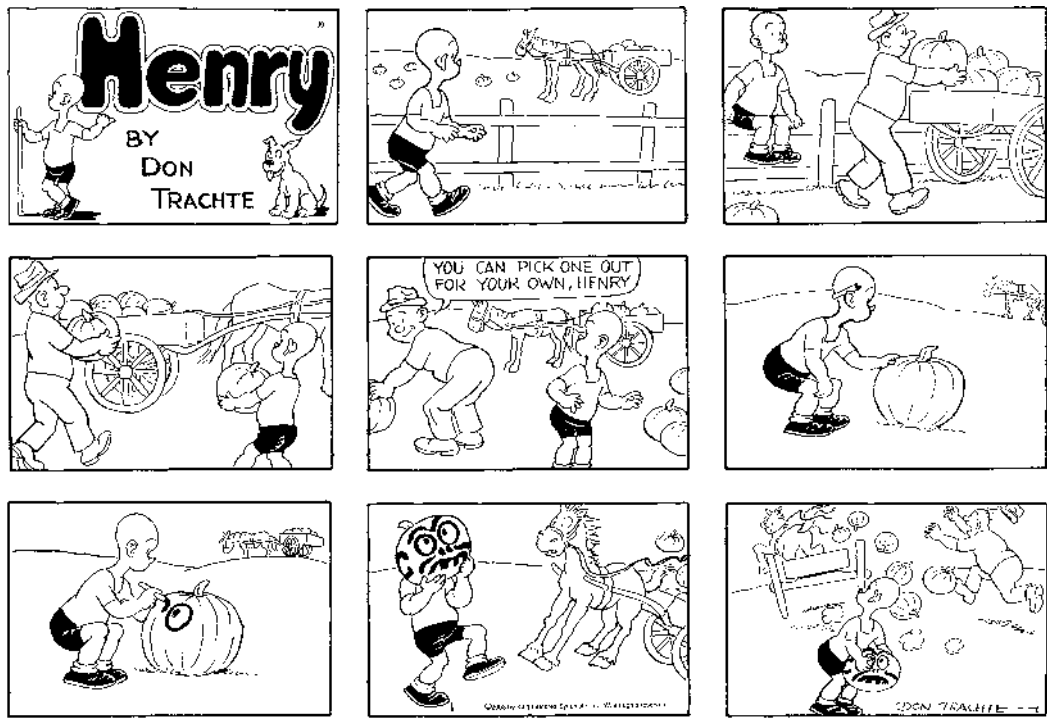
Amber Waves by Dave T. Phipps


OH, GREAT, I GUESS THIS MEANS SUMMER IS OFFICIALLY OVER.
WAIT A MINUTE, THIS MEANS SNOWFORTS AND SLEDDING!
I KNOW WINTER JUST BEGAN, BUT I CAN ALWAYS...
WAIT FOR SNOW IN THE BORING COLD.

The Spats by Jeff Pickering




MARK TRAIL
SPRINGBOKS ONCE MIGRATED ACROSS THE AFRICAN VELDT IN VAST HERDS OF MANY THOUSANDS OF ANIMALS
TODAY THESE SMALL ANTELOPES ARE GREATLY REDUCED IN NUMBERS AND MOST LIVE ON PROTECTED RESERVES
COMMUNICATIONS AMONG MEMBERS OF AFRICAN SPRINGBOK HERDS ARE ACCOMPLISHED IN AN UNUSUAL FASHION
WHEN STARTLED, THE BUCK "SPRINGS" INTO THE AIR WITH ITS HEAD DOWN AND BACK CURVED...
ALONG THE BACKS OF THESE STRIKINGLY MARKED ANTELOPES IS A DOUBLE FOLD LINED WITH LONG WHITE HAIRS
AND THE WHITE HAIRS, STANDING ERECT, FLASH LIKE WARNING BEACONS
THIS "PRONKING" IS QUICKLY TAKEN UP BY OTHERS AS THE ALERTED HERD MOVES SWIFTLY AWAY FROM DANGER
JACK BIRD



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CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

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CLASSIFIED ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 7-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as $25 per 3 liner ad for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of below packages that fits your budget.

	ADS (7DAYS) COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	**$25**
• 5-Liner	**$35**
• 3-Liner with picture	**$45**
• 5-Liner with picture	**$55**

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Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday And Sunday Issues:
- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on either Sunday or Monday issues.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

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REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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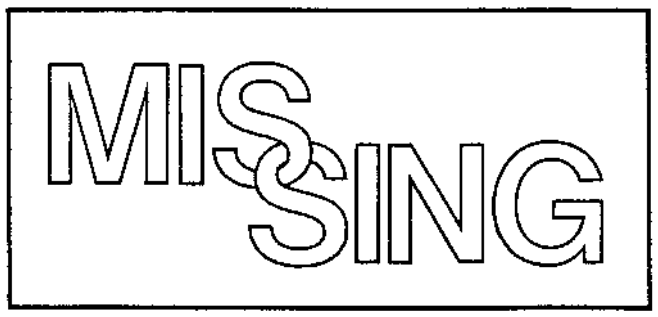
Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.



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2 hurt in Puerto Rico vehicular crash. PAG
There is still hope for nonimm
joins Micronesia Si
OPINION METER
This week's poll:
With what you know of the CUC situation, do you support the adoption of new regulation

235- NEWS

Mussina calls it a career after first 20-win year

NEWYORK (AP)—Mike Mussina took a secret to the ballpark every day this season. Maybe that's why he was so successful on the mound, so jovial in the clubhouse.

From Day One of spring training, he knew this was his final year—even if it meant giving up bids for 300 wins, a World Series ring and a better shot at the Hall of Fame.

The New York Yankees pitcher walked away from baseball Thursday after his only 20-win season, a month shy of his 40th birthday with a still-potent right arm.

"I don't have any regrets with what I decided. This is the right time," Mussina said on a conference call.

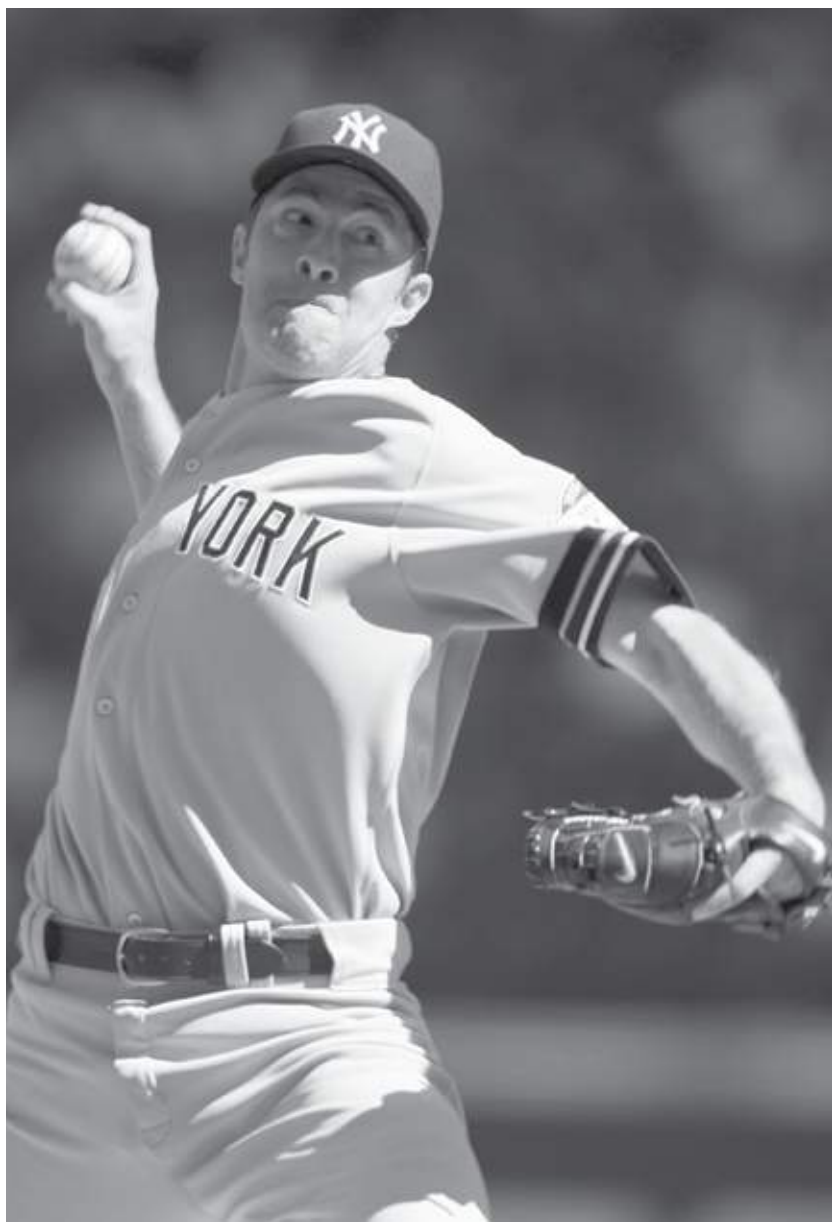
"I don't think there was ever a point where I looked around and said, 'You know what, I'm going to change my mind,'" he said. "It was like the last year of high school. You know it's going to end and you enjoy the ride."

Mussina finished 270-153 with a 3.68 ERA in 18 seasons with Baltimore and New York. A thinking man's pitcher who relied on sharp control and did more than overpower hitters, he ranks 32nd on the career wins list and 19th in strikeouts with 2,813.

His dad and brother tried to talk him out of retirement and Yankees general manager Brian Cashman called to ask about his future. Instead, "Moose" became the first healthy pitcher to leave on his own accord following a 20-win season in more than a century.

Sandy Koufax left the Dodgers after 1966 because of agonizing elbow pain, Eddie Cicotte and Lefty Williams got tossed in the Black Sox scandal. Henry Schmidt won 22 for Brooklyn in 1903 as a rookie, then decided to go West and return to the Pacific Coast League.

"I love baseball. I love playing, I love pitching," Mussina said. "This is good for me. This is it."



AP

In this Sept. 7, 2008 file photo, New York Yankees' Mike Mussina pitches to the Seattle Mariners during the first inning of a baseball game in Seattle.

On Mussina's last day as a big leaguer, he pitched six shutout innings at Fenway Park to beat Boston and wind up 20-9—it made him the oldest first-time 20-game winner ever.

"It was a nice way to finish," he said.

As for what's next, "I don't really have any plans," he said.

A man of diverse interests, no telling whether he'll get to enjoy the things he sometimes talked about—going to the Daytona 500, seeing his favorite Irish setters in the Westminster Kennel Club dog show.

A few hours before his official announcement, Mussina shoveled snow and cleaned closets at his home in Montoursville, Pa. He likes small-town life, often coached basketball and football at the local high school and intends to spend a lot of time watching his 10- and 5-year-old sons play ball.

In five years, Mussina will become eligible for the Hall of Fame, and it figures to be a lively debate. He acknowledged there are solid arguments on both sides.

"It's not my decision to make," he said.

Mussina never won a Cy Young Award or a World Series championship and was a 20-game winner just on the final day of his career. He was 7-8 with a 3.42 ERA in postseason play.

He was amazingly consistent—after going 4-5 as a rookie with Baltimore in 1991, he became the only AL pitcher to reach double figures in wins for 17 straight years. He was a five-time All-Star and won his seventh Gold Glove earlier this month.

Tall and slim, Mussina spent his whole career pitching in the bruising AL East, smack in the Steroids Era.

His best outing came in 2001 at Boston, when he came within one strike of a perfect game before Carl Everett singled. Mussina's proudest moment came in Game 7 of the 2003 ALCS, when he made the first relief appearance of his career and threw three scoreless innings against the Red Sox.

"My numbers match up well with guys who are in the Hall of the Fame," he said, adding other pitchers have won more games and been left out.

Said Yankees captain Derek Jeter: "Moose's accomplishments in the game over the last 18 years represent a Hall of Fame player."

Mussina said he couldn't envision himself working in baseball in the foreseeable future, though he was open to someday helping out young pitchers.

Money isn't an issue. He left Baltimore to sign an $88.5 million, six-year contract as a free agent with the Yankees before the 2001 season and finished with a $23 million, two-year deal.

Mussina graduated early from Stanford with an economics degree—he won the College World Series with the Cardinal—and came to the Yankees with a reputation as an ace pitcher with a prickly personality. He softened over the years, and by the end became a chatty clubhouse spokesman who kept reporters chuckling with his witty observations and thoughtful answers.

Mussina frequently sat in front of his locker doing crossword puzzles. In fact, he appeared in the 2006 documentary "Wordplay" and kept a thesaurus in his stall for knotty problems.

No words, however, could change his mind on calling it a career. Mussina said he decided last January that he had one more season.

"Good or bad, this is going to be the last year," he told himself. "That's just how I felt."

Mussina said most of his teammates knew his plans. More relaxed, he called it a fun year.

Now, he said, it was time to stay home. Spring training would have to come and go.

"I think February is going to be a little strange," he said. "It'll be different. It'll be weird."

Yankees control shifts to Steinbrenner's son Hal

NEW YORK (AP)—For more than three decades, George Steinbrenner's imprints were all over the New York Yankees.

Blockbuster trades, pricey signings, hirings, firings—they all needed his OK.

No more.

The omnipresent owner's colorful 35-year reign of pronouncements, threats and bluster ended Thursday when he passed control of baseball's most famous and successful franchise to his youngest son, Hal.

"I realize it's a great responsibility," said Hal Steinbrenner, who turns 40 on Dec. 3. "My dad is, needless to say, a tough act to follow."

The elder Steinbrenner has gradually withdrawn from the Yankees' day-to-day operations in recent years as his health faded, and brothers Hal and Hank were appointed co-chairmen in April.

George Steinbrenner, now 78, headed a group that bought the club in January 1973 for an $8.7 million net price and became one of the most high-profile owners in all of sports. He dominated the back pages of New York's tabloids, earning the nickname "The Boss" as he spent lavishly on players and changed managers 20 times during his first 23 years as owner, feuding with Billy Martin, Yogi Berra and Dave Winfield.

The Yankees regained their former glory, winning six World Series titles and 10 American League pennants from 1976-2003. They also transformed themselves into a sports empire that owns a cable television network and food concession company and is preparing to move into a $1.3 billion new Yankee Stadium next year.

Steinbrenner was baseball's longest-serving current owner, but has cut back his role with the team following fainting spells that required hospitalization in December 2003 and October 2006.

His speech in public has been halting and weak since the second fall, and he has needed assistance when walking. From a golf cart, he delivered the balls for the ceremonial first pitches at July's All-Star game at Yankee Stadium, then stayed home in Florida to watch the 85-year-old park's final game on television in September.

Baseball owners unanimously approved the change in control during a meeting Thursday, ending an era in which Steinbrenner became the team's defining image as much as Babe Ruth and Joe DiMaggio did in earlier eras.

"He's been slowing down the last couple years," Hal Steinbrenner said. "Really, for the last two years I have been intimately involved with all aspects and all departments of the company. It's what I've been doing day-to-day. My duties aren't really going to change and my workload isn't going to change much. So, I mean, it's as much a procedural thing within the family, I think, as anything at this point."

Hal Steinbrenner shuns attention as much as his father craved it. But while 51-year-old Hank has become the public voice of the team's ownership in the past year, Hal was at Yankee Stadium far more frequently than his brother. Hal is responsible for financial operations of the club, and Hank oversees general manager Brian Cashman and the baseball operations.

"I'm not going to ask the people in the family why they picked one against the other," said baseball commissioner Bud Selig, who visited Steinbrenner in Tampa, Fla., before Game 2 of the World Series last month. "I get enough trouble as commissioner. I don't need to get into family squabbles."

Steinbrenner's tenure was twice interrupted by lengthy bans from baseball (1974-76 and 1990-93), but it was widely believed he still made the final decisions during those periods.

Major League Baseball said Steinbrenner requested the change in control be made, and the Yankees said Hank Steinbrenner voted in favor of it. George Steinbrenner retains his title as the team's chairman and his wife, Joan, is a vice chairperson along with their daughters, Jennifer Steinbrenner Swindal and Jessica Steinbrenner.

Before Hal, each son-in-law of the owner emerged as heir apparents, only to divorce the owner's daughters and depart the team.

Phillies Utley, Feliz to have surgery

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Three-time All-Star Chase Utley, who anchored the middle of the lineup for the World Series champion Phillies, will have surgery and may not be ready for the start of the 2009 regular season.

Utley will have surgery next week to repair any bone or cartilage damage he may have in his right hip. He will be able to begin baseball activity in three to four months. But depending on the extent of the damage, full recovery could take until May, team officials said Thursday.

"Our feeling is that he's going to be fairly close to ready if not ready by opening day," general manager Ruben Amaro Jr. said. "We fully expect to have Chase Utley with us for the bulk of the season."

Utley was bothered by symptoms during the season but still hit .292 and led all second basemen with 33 home runs and 104 RBIs. While his season numbers were impressive, Utley started the season very well and tailed off in the last four months.

Utley had 18 home runs and 47 RBIs through the end of May but hit just 15 home runs the rest of the season.

Trainer Scott Sheridan said Utley thought the injury may have occurred while he trained during the last offseason but could not pinpoint an exact time.

"He had some symptoms in spring training, he had some symptoms in July," Sheridan said. "It was really on and off throughout the season."

Although Sheridan said the injury might have been bothering Utley most in July, Amaro said his decrease in production as the season went on was not necessarily a result of the injury.

"He's a team player and he's a very tough guy, there's no question about it, but the reality of it is he's not a dummy," Amaro said. "If he was not able to perform, he would not have gone on to the field."

Team physician Dr. Michael Ciccotti and specialist Dr. Bryan Kelly examined Utley following the World Series and recommended surgery. Kelly will perform the surgery next week in New York but a date has not been set.

Amaro said he does not expect to go outside of the organization for help at second base. Utility infielder Eric Bruntlett and prospect Jason Donald will likely hold down the position in Utley's absence, he said.

Third baseman Pedro Feliz was also having Thursday on his back. He spent 26 days on the disabled list last season with a lower back injury. The operation will be followed by an eight-to-12 week rehabilitation program.

Feliz hit .249 with 14 home runs and 58 RBIs after joining the Phillies as a free agent before the season.

Bryant, Lakers eclipse Suns, 105-92

PHOENIX (AP)—Kobe Bryant scored 24 points and Vladimir Radmanovic made all five of his 3-pointers to lead the Los Angeles Lakers past the Phoenix Suns, 105-92 on Thursday night.

Bryant shot only 8-of-23, but the Lakers overwhelmed Phoenix with their depth. Six players reached double figures as Los Angeles improved its record to a league-best 9-1.

Radmanovic scored 15, Lamar Odom 13, Jordan Farmar 11, and Andrew Bynum and Trevor Ariza 10 apiece for Los Angeles. Amare Stoudemire scored 21 for Phoenix on 9-for-21 shooting.

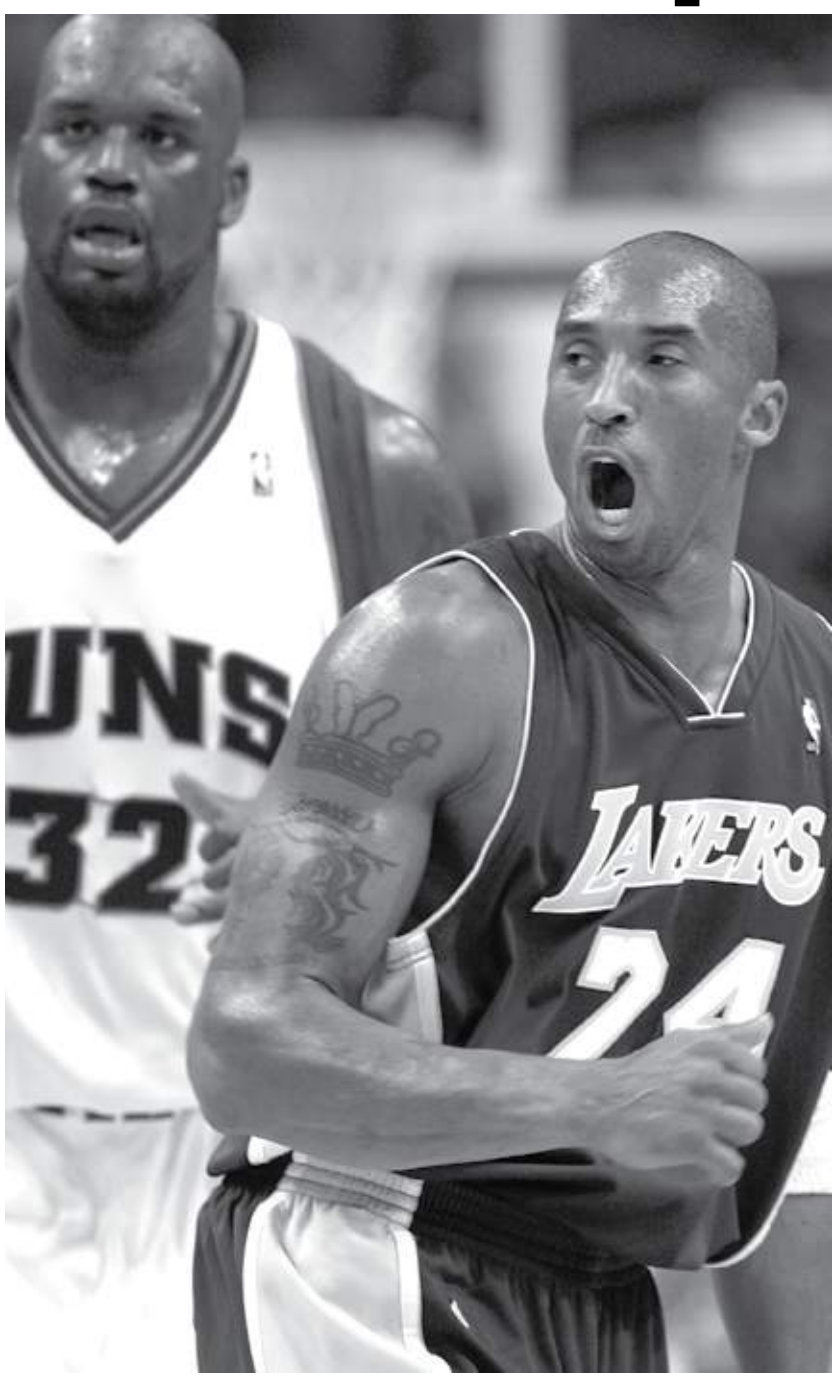
Shaquille O'Neal added 15 points and nine rebounds against the Lakers, a team he helped win three NBA titles. The Suns' Steve Nash was scoreless in the first half and finished with eight points and 10 assists, leaving the court with back spasms with 4:38 to play.

The Lakers made 10 of 21 3-pointers to win in Phoenix for the third straight time.

Los Angeles took the lead for good late in the first half. The Lakers led by 14 in the third quarter and were up 89-71 when Odom sank a 3-pointer with 8:34 to play. Phoenix cut the lead to 10 in the final few minutes but got no closer.

The Lakers went on a 14-0 run to end the first quarter and start the second, taking a 32-24 lead on Bynum's 10-footer. The Suns responded with a 12-2 spurt to go up 37-34 when Grant Hill made one of two free throws with 7:05 left in the half.

Los Angeles, though, outscored Phoenix 17-7 the rest of the quarter to lead 51-44 at the break. The Lakers padded the lead in the opening minutes of the second half. Bryant's fast-break basket made it 63-51 with 7:47 left in the third quarter.



AP

Los Angeles Lakers' Kobe Bryant (24) cheers on his team as Phoenix Suns' Shaquille O'Neal runs up court during the third quarter of an NBA basketball game Thursday, Nov. 20, 2008, in Phoenix.

The Suns twice cut it to eight before back-to-back 3-pointers by Radmanovic and Derek Fisher gave Los Angeles a 76-62 with 2:21 left in the third. The Lakers led 80-67 entering the fourth.

Celtics 98, Pistons 90

At Boston, the Allen Iverson trade looked good for the Pistons when they handed the Lakers their first loss of the season and snapped Cleveland's eight-game winning streak.

It hasn't helped them against the team they need to beat most.

Rajon Rondo had 18 points and eight assists, outplaying the recent Pistons acquisition and leading the Boston Celtics to victory over Detroit in a rematch of last season's Eastern Conference finals.

"I saw him play like this in the championship last season," Iverson said of his fellow point guard. "Rondo played great. He did an excellent job coming off picks and getting to the basket and making plays."

Iverson had 16 points and four assists for Detroit, which fell to 4-3 since he was acquired from Denver for Chauncey Billups and Antonio McDyess. Those two helped the Pistons reach the conference finals, where they lost to Boston in six games as the Celtics went on to win their unprecedented 17th NBA title.

The Pistons followed the trade with wins against Los Angeles and Cleveland - two of the top teams in the league. But they've also lost a pair of blowouts to the defending champs since swapping Billups for Iverson at point guard; the Celtics also beat Detroit handily in Iverson's Nov. 9 home debut, outscoring them 30-10 in the second quarter before coasting to an 88-76 victory.

"We're still trying to find our identity, and it's still early in the season," Pistons guard Richard Hamilton said. "Any time you lose to a team two times by over 20 points, that's absolutely bananas because we don't play like that."

The Celtics also said they expect things to change once Iverson has had some of his much-coveted practice time with his new team.

"They've had some great wins, but you have to figure they're only going to get better as the year goes along with Allen Iverson," said Paul Pierce, who scored just nine points on 2-for-9 shooting - the second time this season Detroit has held him to single digits. "Even though Iverson is a great player, we don't have to worry about their point guard posting us up."

The 6-foot-3, 202-pound Billups was a touch matchup for the 6-1, 171-pound Rondo in the playoffs. Iverson is faster, and he came out sizzling on Thursday with seven points and a steal to help the Pistons open a 13-2 lead before Rondo helped the Celtics turn the game into a blowout.

"I would prefer not to play either" Iverson or Billups, Boston coach Doc Rivers said. "Allen, in the middle of the first, it was like, 'Slow down.' I'm amazed by that guy every time I see him play. The speed and endurance that he has every night is remarkable."

Kevin Garnett scored 15 in his return from a one-game suspension, and Kendrick Perkins had 10 rebounds before both teams emptied their benches down the stretch.

After scoring 13 of the first 15 points in the game, Detroit then they made just a single free throw over the next four minutes and Rondo answered with three baskets to help Boston tie the game 14-all.

The Celtics scored the first seven points of the second quarter and opened a 40-27 lead with 5:13 left in the half. It was 49-40 at halftime and Boston went on an 18-5 run in the third to turn a 10-point lead into a 75-52 blowout.

Steelers defense controls Bengals in 27-10 win

PITTSBURGH (AP)—Ben Roethlisberger and the Pittsburgh Steelers know exactly how to beat the Cincinnati Bengals—with or without Chad Ocho Cinco.

The Steelers limited the depleted Bengals to six first downs following an early touchdown drive and found just enough offense themselves amid the snow flurries to control the clock behind Roethlisberger and beat Cincinnati 27-10 on Thursday night.

Pittsburgh (8-3) wasn't dominating—except defensively—in winning its fifth in a row over Cincinnati (1-9-1), its longest streak since an eight-game run in the early 1990s. The Steelers trailed 7-0 until Roethlisberger threw a 3-yard pass to tight end Heath Miller, their first touchdown in more than seven quarters, and didn't take control until backup running backs Mewelde Moore and Gary Russell led a third-quarter drive that made it 20-7.

Russell ran 2 yards for his first NFL touchdown with 16 seconds left in the third after Moore, benched four days before after being stopped at the goal line by San Diego on fourth-and-inches, ran four times for 21 yards and made a 22-yard reception during a 64-yard drive.

Roethlisberger, turnover free for a second successive game while going 17 of 30 for 243 yards, scored himself from the 8 late in the game as Pittsburgh held a more than 10-minute edge in time of possession.

Jeff Reed also kicked field goals of 37 and 38 yards that weren't sure things given the slippery field conditions that helped slow a Bengals offense that was loaded with backups due to injuries—reserves played most of the game at nine positions—and Ocho Cinco's deactivation for violating team rules.

Ryan Fitzpatrick, under constant pressure from a Pittsburgh defense that leads the NFL in almost every major statistical category, was below 100 yards in passing until a brief drive in the fourth quarter that ended with Shayne Graham's 26-yard field goal. He finished 20-of-37 for 168 yards, but the Bengals were outgained 364-208.

For most of the game, the Bengals were as frigid as the weather. The game time temperature of 32 with a wind chill in the low 20s didn't prevent Pittsburgh's defensive starters from playing in shirt sleeves - much like the late Mike Webster, the Hall of Fame center, once did in miserably cold games during the 1970s.

Ocho Cinco's absence allowed the Steelers to double cover T.J. Houshmandzadeh, who was coming off eight consecutive games with six or more catches but found little open space downfield and ended with four catches for 20 yards.

The Steelers, held without a touchdown during the first 11-10 victory in NFL history against San Diego, got off to another slow start offensively before scoring on Miller's catch in traffic in the end zone, but not until Cincinnati scored first on Fitzpatrick's 10-yard pass to Glenn Holt on third-and-6 late in the first. Holt, getting more playing time because of Ocho Cinco's absence, hadn't caught a pass all season until making one ahead of his TD catch.

Pittsburgh, getting good field position because of Kyle Larson's 30-yard punt in a game in which both punters were miserable, tied it two plays after coach Mike Tomlin went for it on fourth-and-1 from the 4, with Russell barely getting the yard to keep the drive going. Roethlisberger hit Hines Ward for 37 yards earlier in the drive.

Reed's 37-yarder with 1:52 left before halftime put Pittsburgh ahead at 10-7. Cincinnati had a chance to tie it or go ahead but couldn't take advantage after Pittsburgh wide receiver Limas Sweed, covering a punt, accidentally allowed the ball to strike his left hand.

The Bengals recovered at the Steelers' 39 with a minute left in the half, but gained only five yards and were out of field goal range when Fitzpatrick threw incomplete on fourth down.

Reed's 38-yarder into a snowy crosswind had just enough distance to make it 13-7 halfway through the third quarter.

NFL BRIEFS

Browns' Quinn has broken finger

BEREA, Ohio (AP)—Cleveland Browns quarterback Brady Quinn broke his right index finger in the first half of Monday night's win over Buffalo, but will try to play Sunday against the Houston Texans. The team initially thought Quinn only bruised his hand after banging it on the helmet of a Bills player. But after he complained of soreness following Wednesday's practice, X-rays were taken and revealed a fracture on the tip of his finger. Quinn was cleared to play by a specialist at the Cleveland Clinic. "We plan to monitor him on a regular basis, just to make sure that it's not getting worse or anything like that," Browns coach Romeo Crennel said Thursday. "But he's going to play, he's going to practice, he's going to try to help the team win." Making his second career start and first on the road, Quinn stayed in against Buffalo and finished 14-of-36 for 185 yards. Late in the fourth quarter, he completed passes of 12 and 16 yards to set up Phil Dawson's winning 56-yard field goal with 1:39 left. Before practice on Thursday, Quinn said his throwing hand was hit in the first and second quarters. He was surprised to learn it was broken. "At this point, it's just a little sore," he said. "I practiced yesterday, practicing today. Just doing the best we can to take all the precautions to make sure it's all right."

Cowboys will put Felix Jones on IR

IRVING, Texas (AP)—Cowboys rookie running back Felix Jones is done for the season.

The team said Thursday that Jones, one of Dallas' two first-round draft picks, will be placed on injured reserve because of a big left toe injury sustained while doing rehabilitation after hurting his left hamstring Oct. 12. Jones returned to practice on a limited basis Wednesday, but the team now says that was to evaluate his ability to play with the toe injury. It is the first time the team confirmed Jones had a setback during rehab for the hamstring, which has healed. Based on that practice and an evaluation by a foot and ankle specialist who reviewed an MRI of Jones' foot, the Cowboys decided Jones couldn't play again this season. Jones rushed for 266 yards and three touchdowns in his six games. He also returned 16 kickoffs for a 27.1-yard average, including a 98-yard touchdown.

Shuttlers' team tourney unveils today

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The 2nd Annual Traders Insurance Badminton Team Tournament will kick off today at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Eight teams will be battling for the championship as they play in mixed double, men's singles, and men's and women's doubles events,

Before the games, an elaborate opening ceremony will be held at 6pm with the eight squads participating in the traditional parade of teams.

A Best in Uniform award will be given. Selection for the best in uniform will be based on the creativity of team name, logo design and relevance, layout of design, and general impact.

Division of Sports and Recreation director Joe Lizama will be the opening rites' guest speaker. Joining him is Jerry Tan, who recently donated shuttlecocks for the tournament.

Northern Marianas Badminton Federation president Marconi Calindas will deliver the opening remarks, while a representative from tournament major sponsor Traders Insurance will also address the participants and guests.

Lizama will lead the ceremonial opening serve.

The eight teams that will fight for the championship are the Net Fighters of team captain Ed Sikayun, the Badminton All-Stars of Edwin Montoya, D'Blue Powers of Roger Vales, D' Bombers of Eric Pena, Bad Masters of Calindas, Red Dragon Shuttlers of Happy Gabriel, Lito Mendoza of the Gray Hawks, and the Smash Killers of Macoi Aguda.

Each team has one A-level player, three B-level players (men's), two B-level players (women's), and two C-level players (one each in the men's and women's division).

There will be six events per playing day and the tournament will have a round robin format. A point will be awarded for a win and the team with the highest points will be declared champion. The top three teams will be awarded trophies and other prizes

NMBF thanked the following for supporting the tournament: Jerry Tan; Shirley's Coffee Shop; Pacific Quick Print; Coral Ocean Point; PTI; Sun Palace Hotel; Wear-A-Marconi, Tropex; Dollar Days; and Labtech International.

13 EVENTS

From Page 28

The three remaining events—200m individual medley, 400m freestyle and 4x50m mixed medley relay—are open to three divisions.

Each swimmer is allowed to compete in only four individual events and one relay. Coaches must indicate two of those events as exhibition. Each school may field as many swimmers in any individual event, but only the two fastest swimmers per schools will get points.

Participating schools are asked to submit entries today to Lisa Kimball. Entries may also be emailed to coach@saipanswimclub.com.

The deadline to submit entries is at 6pm today.

For more information, contact Kimball at 322-7130.

Whispering Palms is this year's defending champion in the elementary division, collecting 225 points from last season's meet. Saipan Community School was second with 150 points, downing third placer Saipan International School by only a point.

The SIS Geckos won the junior and high school divisions, finishing ahead of Marianas High School, Ladera International School, Grace Christian Academy, and SCS.

PACQUIAO

From Page 28

"Spiritual, physical and mental. You have to focus on that," he said.

The fight will be literally the biggest ever for Pacquiao, who first fought at 106 pounds and will be fighting at the welterweight limit of 147. He has gained weight while De La Hoya has been losing. The taller De La Hoya has fought at 160 pounds but is down to 145.

De La Hoya has said he considers himself a natural welterweight.

Pacquiao, who weighs 151, noted the difference in height, but did not seem concerned about any weight issues for the bout.

"I'm very comfortable at this weight. There are a lot of people saying that Manny Pacquiao is moving up a weight division and, `Is he going to be fast or is he going to be slow?"' Pacquiao said. "In training, we focus on speed, because the speed will be the key in this fight."

Roach thinks weight also will be a factor that will work in Pacquiao's favor. After the weigh-in for his 134-pound bout against David Diaz in June, Pacquiao was up to 147 when he stepped into the ring.

"I expected him to be sluggish, thought he put too much weight on," Roach said. "You know what? He didn't. He was great that night, he was explosive. I think it was the best fight he's ever fought. He was very disciplined. There'll be a lot of similarities in this fight."

Pacquiao stopped Diaz in the ninth round.

Roach said Pacquiao was stronger now that he's gotten heavier, adding De La Hoya "might be at weight now, but I know he's killing himself making it and I think he's going to be weak going into the fight."

Pacquiao said he is preparing for whatever tactics De La Hoya uses.

"My concern is if he jabs and is running, running," he said. "We have been working on that. And we are prepared if he's going to come in and fight toe to toe."

And Pacquiao is fully aware of the opportunity presented by going up against one of boxing's best-known stars.

"This is the biggest fight in my boxing career," he said. "This is my (chance) that the name Manny Pacquiao will be known not only in the Philippines, but in all boxing."

BATALLONES

From Page 28

tourney plus an oven toaster.

Senate president Pete Reyes and Greg Gamboa finished tied at third place with identical 70s, while Father Manny Corcuera, Mike Cruz, and Jess Yumul were all lumped together in the fifth spot with their 71s.

A record-number 27 players took part in the weekend pre-Thanksgiving golf tournament. The rest of the 22 players, with their scores in parenthesis, are as follows: Dan Ganacias (net 72); Ted Malaran (73); Jason Gatdula (73); Jhun Calma (74); Rey Ferraz (74); Adony Matutino (74); Nono Bostre (74); Jojo Geva (75); Nestor Siruelo (76); John Matsumoto (76); Henry Bautista (77); Leo Ganacias (78), Manny Po (78), Rommel Cruz (78), Freddie Cataluna (79), Nazareno Ortiz Jr. (79), Rodrigo Nimas (79), William Retardo (80), and Alsree Chong (88).

Closest-to-the-pin winners in all par-3 holes also won dressed turkeys courtesy of former president Malaran.

Winners of the previous monthly tournaments of Fil-Taga for 2008 are Sen. Pete Reyes (February), Bostre (March), Butch Sigua (April), Bautista (May), Ferraz (June), Malaran (July), Leo Ganacias (August), Dan Ganacias (September), and Cataluna (October).

Established in 1993, Fil-Taga's tournaments operate under a computer-controlled handicap system that creates parity among players in the A and B Flights.

A Fil-Taga Ace of the Month champion is crowned monthly. Regular tournaments are scheduled once a month, normally every third Sunday. Green fees are in the $35 to $40 price range for most tournaments.

WHEN

From Page 28

This isn't a sportswriter making the suggestion; it's the newly elected president of the United States, for crying out loud.

And now is the perfect time to do it. We're nearing the end of a college football season that is tailor-made for an eight-team playoff.

Obama isn't actually president until Jan. 20, and even though he is facing many more serious issues than college football, he has a few moments between now and then to dabble. Should the president be involved in policymaking as it pertains to college athletics? Probably not ... not at this level anyway. Nobody is seriously suggesting he convene a panel to rid the nation of the BCS or spend taxpayer money by appointing some silly commission. But if Steve Kroft asks Obama at the end of a "60 Minutes" interview what he thinks of a college football playoff system, then Obama should tell him exactly what he really thinks.

And he did.

Kroft: "I have one last question: As president of the United States, what can you do, or what do you plan to do about getting a college football playoff for the national championship?"

Obama: "I think any sensible person would say that, if you've got a bunch of teams who play throughout the season and many of them have one loss or two losses, there's no clear, decisive winner, that we should be creating a playoff system. Eight teams, that would be three rounds to determine a national champion. It would—it would add three extra weeks to the season. You could trim back on the regular season. I don't know any serious fan of college football who has disagreed with me on this. So I'm going to throw my weight around a little bit. I think it's the right thing to do."

First of all, Obama is right on the money with his emphasis on "any sensible person." Second, this isn't unfamiliar territory for a U.S. president.

Going back to Dwight D. Eisenhower, who played college football at Army and was a golf fanatic, every U.S. president has been anywhere from somewhat involved to immersed in sports at some point in his life. John F. Kennedy loved golf and his touch football. Lyndon B. Johnson had a thing for college football. Richard M. Nixon not only sent a play or two to Redskins coach George Allen, he said later in his life that if it wasn't for politics, he would have been a sportswriter. Gerald R. Ford played college football at Michigan. Ronald Reagan broadcast baseball games. George H.W. Bush played college baseball at Yale. Clinton went to his share of NBA games. That brings us all the way up to George W. Bush, who for awhile owned the Texas Rangers.

Anyone who paid a lick of attention to the campaign can see how competitive U.S. presidents have to be. (Carter didn't have enough appreciation for the Olympics, and you see how that worked out for him.)

Obama loves sports, but his appreciation is greater than that. He understands sports. He studies sports and the people who play them. Like many of us of a certain age, he considered Arthur Ashe a hero. Because of his intellect and demeanor, Ashe might have been more than that to Obama, perhaps something of a role model. When I first met Obama while working on a book I edited for Charles Barkley, the three of us got to talk more than a little bit about sports. Obama, soon to vacate his home in Chicago for the White House, doesn't have to just throw his weight around; he can throw his knowledge around. He respects competition too much to pander to Cubs fans when he cares about the White Sox.

Well, he cares about college football, and it's a good thing he didn't phony it up with ESPN or "60 Minutes" by trotting out some politically neutral answer. Of course, it's interesting now to see how people are reacting.

Texas Coach Mack Brown supported Obama's position. Texas Tech Coach Mike Leach went overboard and said he favored a 64-team tournament. Craig Thompson, the commissioner of the Mountain West Conference, said he wanted to know how the President-elect would pick the eight teams for the tournament. (OK, for the 100th time: You take the top eight teams by some formula using the various polls and computer ratings, put them in four bowl games, play down to four teams that would play in two more bowl games, then have the championship game Jan. 8 at one of the same four locations that host the title game now. A conference championship means nothing if you're sorry, like the ACC and Big Ten are this year. It could be two teams from the Big 12, two teams from the Southeastern Conference.)

BCS Coordinator John Swofford, who also is the ACC commissioner, felt the need to issue a statement saying: "I am glad (Obama) has a passion for college football like so many other Americans. For now, our constituencies—and I know he understands constituencies—have settled on the current BCS system. ... We certainly respect the opinions of president-elect Obama and welcome dialogue on what's best for college football."

OK, it's a lame statement, but the point is people like Swofford—and the out-of-touch, hypocritical university presidents he represents—feel forced by Obama's participation in the dialogue to be accountable and to do something besides sit entrenched in their same old lazy positions. The only thing better than dialogue would be a new conclusion to the season, the same one our newly elected president has so passionately articulated.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

Boston	11	2	.846	–
Toronto	6	5	.545	4
New York	6	5	.545	4
Philadelphia	5	6	.455	5
New Jersey	4	6	.400	5 1/2

Central Division

Cleveland	9	3	.750	–
Detroit	8	4	.667	1
Indiana	5	5	.500	3
Chicago	5	7	.417	4
Milwaukee	5	8	.385	4 1/2

Southeast Division

Orlando	8	3	.727	–
Atlanta	7	4	.636	1
Miami	6	6	.500	2 1/2
Charlotte	3	7	.300	4 1/2
Washington	1	8	.111	6

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

Houston	7	5	.583	–
New Orleans	5	5	.500	1
San Antonio	5	6	.455	1 1/2
Dallas	5	7	.417	2
Memphis	4	7	.364	2 1/2

Northwest Division

Utah	8	4	.667	–
Denver	8	4	.667	–
Portland	7	5	.583	1
Minnesota	2	8	.200	5
Oklahoma City	1	11	.083	7

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	8	1	.889	–
Phoenix	8	4	.667	1 1/2
Golden State	5	6	.455	4
Sacramento	5	8	.385	5
L.A. Clippers	2	9	.182	7

Yesterday's Games

L.A. Lakers 105, Phoenix 92
Boston 98, Detroit 90

NFL STANDINGS

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

East

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
N.Y. Jets	7	3	0	.700	289	221
Miami	6	4	0	.600	209	197
New England	6	4	0	.600	219	194
Buffalo	5	5	0	.500	219	218

South

Tennessee	10	0	0	1.000	244	131
Indianapolis	6	4	0	.600	224	224
Jacksonville	4	6	0	.400	212	210
Houston	3	7	0	.300	236	287

North

Pittsburgh	8	3	0	.727	236	160
Baltimore	6	4	0	.600	222	180
Cleveland	4	6	0	.400	201	221
Cincinnati	1	9	1	.136	148	276

West

Denver	6	4	0	.600	248	271
San Diego	4	6	0	.400	254	229
Oakland	2	8	0	.200	128	235
Kansas City	1	9	0	.100	165	273

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

East

N.Y. Giants	9	1	0	.900	292	170
Washington	6	4	0	.600	181	182
Dallas	6	4	0	.600	230	229
Philadelphia	5	4	1	.550	264	193

South

Carolina	8	2	0	.800	222	155
Tampa Bay	7	3	0	.700	219	160
Atlanta	6	4	0	.600	231	198
New Orleans	5	5	0	.500	266	249

North

Green Bay	5	5	0	.500	274	209
Chicago	5	5	0	.500	240	231
Minnesota	5	5	0	.500	223	234
Detroit	0	1	0	0	.000	173
308						

West

Arizona	7	3	0	.700	289	228
San Francisco	3	7	0	.300	230	275
Seattle	2	0		.200	190	257
St. Louis	2	8	0	.200	144	317

Yesterday's Game

Pittsburgh 27, Cincinnati 10

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Shuttlers' team tourney unveils today

The 2nd Annual Traders Insurance Badminton Team Tournament will kick off today at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Mussina calls it a career after first 20-win year

Mike Mussina took a secret to the ballpark every day this season. Maybe that's why he was so successful on the mound, so jovial in the clubhouse.

25

13 events lined up for All Schools

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The Saipan Swim Club will be holding the 16th Annual All School Swimming Championships today with 13 events lined up at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool in Marpi.

The swim meet will have competitions in elementary (9-and-under and 12-and-under age group), junior high school (14-and-under), and high school divisions (18-and-under).

The annual tournament will start at 7am with the 4x50m freestyle relay for three divisions. The 200m freestyle swim will follow and will also have competitions in three divisions.

The 50m butterfly will feature only swimmers in the elementary school division, while the 100m butterfly is only for high school and junior high participants.

The 100m and 50m freestyle swims are open to all divisions, while the 50m breaststroke event is for elementary school swimmers only. Junior high and high school swimmers will get their turn in the 100m breaststroke.

The 50m backstroke will be for elementary school swimmers only, while the 100m backstroke will have competitors in the high school and junior high school divisions.

See 13 EVENTS on Page 27

DAN KIMBALL

Junior Pamaran is seen here competing in the 100m freestyle swim in the 3rd Annual Saipan Swim Club Heptathlon in February this year. Pamaran will be suiting up for the MHS Dolphins when SSC holds the All Schools Championships today at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool in Marpi.

Pacquiao confident as he prepares for 'biggest fight'

AP

Manny Pacquiao, spars during a media workout in Los Angeles Monday, Nov. 17,2008.

BOXING

LOS ANGELES (AP)— Trainer Freddie Roach believes Manny Pacquiao will have one significant edge when he fights Oscar De La Hoya: concentration.

Roach said the 35-year-old De La Hoya has changed since his younger days as one of the most dominant fighters.

"He's not quite as active, he's a little more patient, and he tires a little bit quicker," Roach said Monday at the Hollywood gym where he trains Pacquiao. "He has had trouble focusing on the game plan. His mind wanders in there.

"He's weak-minded. I'm not saying nothing bad about him. But some people are very strong-minded, like Manny Pacquiao, and he can hold the game plan throughout."

Pacquiao, who faces De La Hoya on Dec. 6 in Las Vegas, said he doesn't know if his opponent is weak-minded. The 29-year-old from the Philippines also is concentrating on his preparation ahead of the bout.

See PACQUIAO on Page 27

Batallones bags November Ace

MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

Rene Batallones won the Fil-Taga Golfers Association's November Ace of the Month Tournament after the topnotcher had to yield the championship since he already won earlier in the year.

The businessman carded a net score of 69 last Sunday at the Marianas Country Club after the 13-handicapper negotiated the 18-hole Marpi golf course with a gross of 10-over 82.

Batallones actually finished a shot higher than Mando Guban, who came away with a net 68 (gross 84), but since the latter already won in January he had to surrender the November plum to the second placer.

Guban may not have come home with the November trophy, but he still pocketed the $100 cash prize for topping the

See BATALLONES on Page 27

By MICHAEL WILBON
(c) 2008, The Washington Post

When Obama talks, BCS should listen

What appeared to be an throwaway line in a conversation with ESPN now has become something of a sporting obsession.

The night before Election Day, Barack Obama said with that increasingly familiar smile on his face and a twinkle in his eye that college football ought to stop messing around with this BCS nonsense and go to a playoff. People noticed.

Then, in an interview broadcast on Sunday night to an exponentially larger network television audience, Obama told "60 Minutes" the same thing, just in a little greater detail, and added with that same twinkle that he might throw his weight around to tilt the college football world in the direction of a playoff.

And people really took notice.

In fact, it's become the No. 1 topic this week in college football and forced another national discussion that those of us with good sense not only welcome, but find a relief. Suddenly, the conference commissioners and college presidents are having to defend their indefensible positions and explain why every team sport in every division, except big-time football, is settled on the field through a playoff. Of course, it's great to see them squirm.

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